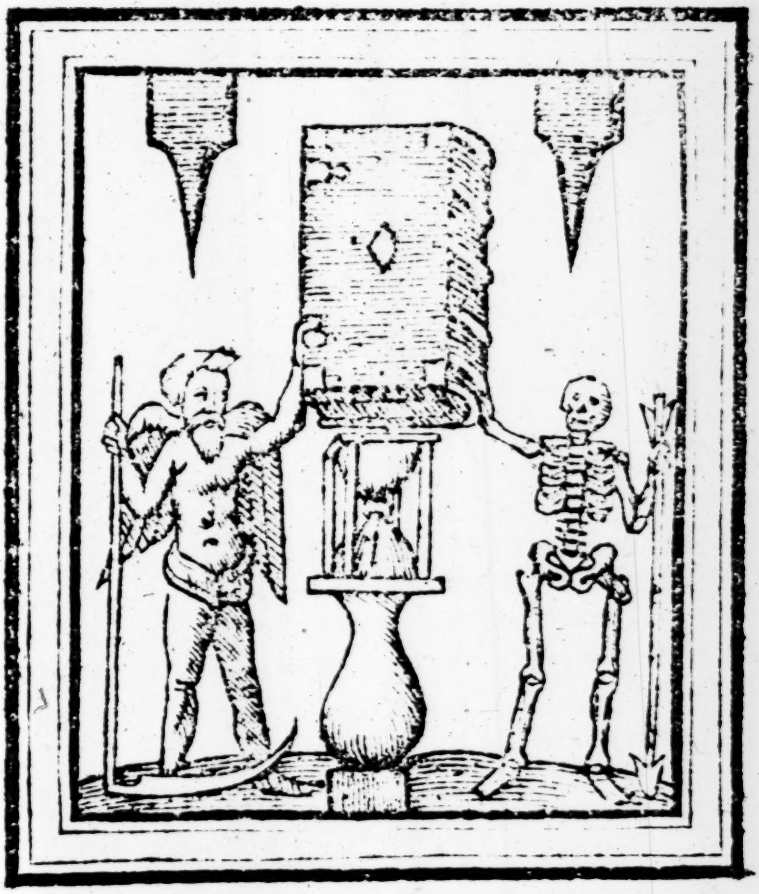
Study me in thy Prime

The Glasse doth Runne, and Time doth Goe,



Death hath his End, I have not so.

Bury Death and weary Time.

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A PREPARATION TO THE LORDS SUPPER;

Preached in three Sermons by the late famous Preacher IOHN PRESTON, Doctor of Divinity, Chaplaine in Ordinarie to his Majestie; Master of *Emanuel* Colledge, and sometimes Preacher of *Lincolnes Inne.*

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THREE SERMONS upon the Sacrament of the LORDS SVPPER.

1 Iohn 5.14.

And this is the assurance which wee have in him, that if we aske any thing according to his will, hee heareth us.

THE scope of the holy Apostle in this Chapter, is to set forth some of those principall priviledges wee have by Iesus

Ieſus Chriſt. One maine and principall (which is the greateſt of all the reſt) is, that through him we have eternall life; And therefore (ſaith he) know this, that when you have the Sonne once, you have life, in the 12. verſe: *Hee that hath the Sonne hath life, and hee that hath not the Sonne, hath not life.* Therefore (ſaith hee) have I written this Epiſtle to you for this purpoſe, that you might conſider well what gaine you have by Chriſt Ieſus. *Theſe things have I written*, (ſaith he) in the verſes before this that I have now read unto you, *to you that beleeve in the Name of the Sonne of God, that you may know that you have eternall*

ternall life. After this hee names another great priviledge, that wee have by Chriſt; mentioned in this verſe, that I have now read unto you. *This* (ſaith he) *is the aſſurance we have in him, that whatſoever wee aske according to his will, hee heareth us.* This is the ſecond great priviledge wee have by Chriſt, wee ſhall bee heard in all our requeſts: it is no more but aske and have, put up what petition you will, if you be in Chriſt once, you have this aſſurance, that he heareth you: but he delivers it with this condition, you muſt firſt be in him: *Wee have this aſſurance in him* (ſaith he) *that if wee aske any thing, accor-*

ding to his will, hee heareth us. So that you see, here are two plaine points lying evidently before us.

Doct.1. 1. That except a man be in Christ, he must not, hee ought not to apply himselfe any of these spirituall priviledges that wee have by him: if we be in Christ, this and all other are ours; if you be in Christ, (saith he) then you have this assurance, for we have that assurance in him. The second point that the verse affords us, is,

Doct.2. 2. That whosoever is in Christ, whatsoever hee askes he shall have it. Now my full intention was, onely to have handled that which is mainely aimed at in

in the verſe (for the other you ſee is but touched by the way) which is this great priviledge that belongs to all Chriſtians, that whatſoever they aske in prayer according to the will of God, they ſhall bee heard in it: But becauſe I underſtand you had a *Sacrament* appointed for this day, I have altered a little that courſe; the hearing of that hath ſomewhat diverted me, and cauſed mee at this time to pitch upon the other point which I named to you; *That except a man be in Chriſt, he ought not to apply any priviledge to himſelfe; if he be, I ſay, all belongs to him.*

When you come to re-

ceive the *Sacrament*, it is a very great priviledge to meddle with thoſe holy myſteries, to have thoſe ſimboles given to you of the love and favour of God in Chriſt, but yet you muſt remember this, that except you be in Chriſt, you have nothing to doe with him, and therefore it is a fit and neceſſary point for this ſeaſon. For when the Apoſtle would give directions to the *Corinthians* what they ſhould doe, to prepare themſelves to the Sacrament, that they may bee worthy receivers, he gives it in this ſhort precept: *Let every man* (ſaith hee) *examine himſelfe, and ſo let him eate this bread, and drink this*

1 Cor. 11. 28.

this cup. Now what is a man to examine himſelfe of? Surely every one that comes to the Lords Table, is to examine himſelfe concerning theſe two things.

1. Whether hee bee in Chriſt, and ſo whether hee hath any right at all to come neere to him in that holy ordinance. 1

2. Though hee bee in Chriſt, yet hee muſt examine himſelfe, whether he bee particularly prepared, quickned, and fitted; whether his heart bee put into ſuch a trance of grace, or faſhioned ſo as it ought to bee, when he comes to the immediate performance of ſuch a duty as that is. Now becauſe I handle this point, 2

but onely for this particular occaſion, I will not enter into ſuch a manner of handling of it, as I was wont to doe at other times, but onely take up ſo much of it as may ſerve for the preſent occaſion; Therefore becauſe I ſay this to you: That except a man bee in Chriſt; hee ought not to take any priviledge to himſelfe: wee will, Firſt exhort every man to conſider whether hee bee in Chriſt: for this is the preſent queſtion which any mans heart would aske, when hee heares this propounded; Why, if all the priviledges bee ſuſpended upon my being in Chriſt, my maine buſineſſe is to examine

examine whether I bee in Chriſt or no. Now becauſe a man may bee in Chriſt, and yet bee ſuſpended by ſome interveniall ſinne, by ſome indiſpoſition of mind and heart, that may grow on him, from the actuall injoying of the preſent fruit and benefit of that priviledge which belongs to him: therefore we will firſt give you rules to examine your ſelves whether you be in Chriſt or no. It is very uſefull to all that now are to receive, or at any other time; its uſefull you know too, not onely upon ſuch an occaſion as this, but upon all occaſions; and therefore a point, (though peculiarly belonging to

this time being taken up for preparation for the Sacrament) which wee may the more boldly venture upon, and you ought to attend it more diligently. I will give you but these two maine notes or rules by which you shall try it.

Whosoever is in Christ there must passe a double act: one on our part, another on Christs part, *My beloved is mine, and I am his*; wee take Christ, and Christ takes us; wheresoever you finde these two acts, such a man is in Christ: There must be an act of our part, something the heart and minde of a man must doe to take Christ. Secondly, the Lord sends and puts

Cant. 2. 16

puts forth ſomething of his he doth put forth an act of the Holy *Spirit*, whereby he comprehends and takes us. Now if thou finde in thy ſelfe theſe two things; Firſt, that thy heart hath exerciſed that act of taking the Lord Ieſus; Secondly, that hee hath ſent forth a vertue, and put forth an act of his to take and to comprehend thee; then certainely thou art in Chriſt; and if it be ſo, all the priviledges belong to thee; if not, thou haſt nothing to doe with this holy Sacrament. Now for the cleare diſcerning of that act which is on our part, you muſt conſider theſe things.

1. Whether you make Chriſt

Christ your chiefest *excellencie.*

2 2. Whether you make him your chiefest *Treasure.*

3 3. Whether you make him your chiefest *Ioy* and Delight.

4 4. Whether he be your chiefest *Refuge*, to whom your hearts retire on all occasions.

5 5. Whether you set him up in your hearts for the chiefest *Commander.*

My beloved, if you find all this done by you, then out of doubt, Christ belongs to you; They are all severall, but they meet in one center, and serve together to make up one rule of triall, to know whether you have tooke Christ to you

you or no; and I will handle them all distinctly as I have named them to you.

1. Therefore consider whether Christ bee thy chiefest *Excellencie*; for it is naturall to every man to seeke some excellencie or other. Indeed beasts, so they may have that which is necessary for the life and service of nature, it is enough for them; and it may be it is enough for all brutish men, whose soules are buried in their bodies that are but sepulchers of men, in whom that spectacle of excellencie which is rationall, belonging to a man is quenched in sensuality. These men, it may be, seeke no excellencie at all, but so they

they may live in pleasures, so they may have that which belongs to their bodies, and to this present life, it is enough for them. But a man who hath any thing of a man in him, as he is a man, considered in these higher parts of his soule, his *mind* and his *will*; he seekes another excellencie suitable to these parts: hee serves a higher, a more spirituall immateriall substance, such as the soule is; and according as mens minds are of divers fashions, so they are in a way of seeking severall excellencies for themselves, yet according to their different ages. Children delight in childish things, and so doe men likewise

wiſe, from whom this childiſhneſſe is worne; yet according to their ſeverall faſhion and underſtanding, ſo they ſeeke a ſeverall excellencie. Some ſeeke learning, knowledge and excellencie in their profeſſion; this is the excellencie they would have. Some ſeeke great places of authoritie and command, and if they had their wiſh, that is the excellencie they would have; Some ſeeke the favour of the Prince. Some to have a great eſtate, that men may ſay, he is worth ſo much, hee hath ſuch Lordſhips, ſuch faire houſes, and lands belonging to him; if hee had the excellencie he deſires, theſe he

he would have. Every man in his owne kind, according as mens understandings are stronger or weaker; according to their different education, as it hath beene more noble, and ingenious, according to the severall companies they keepe, where they find such and such things magnified; according to the severall ages they live in: (as wee say something is in request in one age, in one companie, something in another) I say according to these severall occasions, so every man seekes a severall excellency to himselfe. Now consider what excellencie thy heart desires, above all things else, wh ther it bee

Iesus

Ieſus Chriſt to bee in him; to excell in grace, to have a new draught of Gods Image in thy ſoule; or whether ſome ſuch thing as I have named: Conſider what is the proper vertue thou wouldſt have thy ſoule to excell in, for there are ſeverall vertues; every thing hath ſome vertue or other which is proper to it; as the vertue of a knife is to cut well; the vertue of a horſe to go well; the vertue of medicine to heale well; the vertue of a ſouldier to fight well; and the vertue of a Chriſtian to bee a holy man; to be holy, gracious, and unblameable in his converſation. Now what is the proper excellencie thy

thy heart ayines at: what is that thou esteemest thy vertue, that if thou wert put to thy choyse that thou mightest have a wish granted thee, thou wouldst most desire? Whether wouldest thou desire this; to excell in grace and holinesse, to have thy sinfull lusts mortified, to have thy heart put into a holy frame of grace? or whether, (if thou wouldest deale impartially with thy selfe) is it not some other excellency that thy heart runnes upon? that thy thoughts and affections are most set upon? Consider when thou lookest upon others, what seemes most gracious

ous in thy ſight, by what thou doeſt moſt value the excellencie of another man, for it is likely thou ſo eſteemeſt thy ſelfe alſo: Conſider therefore I ſay what thou meaſureſt thy ſelfe and others by; A man that is in Chriſt, ſets ſo much by himſelfe, and by every man as he is in Gods Booke: as you ſee, men are rated, and their wealth eſteemed according as they are in the Kings bookes. See what thy heart ſaith to this, whether thou ſetteſt ſo much by thy ſelfe and alſo by every man elſe, as hee is in Gods favour; as hee hath the eminencie of grace and alſo of holineſſe above

above others; or whether it be ſomething elſe by which thou rateſt thy ſelf&others: Conſider what is that outward badge, that Livery, that Cognizance thou deſireſt to weare, which thou ſhouldeſt boaſt of among men: you ſhall ſee it in *Paul*, (ſaith he) When I come amongſt you, I doe *not regard the excellency of naturall wiſedome*; I care not to come with that; The time was when I prized it, as you prize it now; but now (ſaith hee) it is another excellency which I ſeeke, which I deſire to weare (as it were:) When I come amongſt you, to preach the Goſpell (ſaith he) I care for nothing elſe,

1 Cor. 2. 1, 2.

I

I care not to be thought to know any elſe, than *Chriſt crucified*: Conſider with thy ſelfe now what thou wouldſt have moſt eminent in thee, in the eyes and eares of men, that which thou wouldeſt weare in the view of all the world; whether it be the Livery of Chriſt; to profeſſe the feare of God, to excell in grace and holineſſe, though the world diſgrace, deſpiſe and hate thee for it: Is this that thy heart deſires? If ſo, its a ſigne thou ſeekeſt Chriſt for thy excellency. Conſider likewiſe what it is that thou eſteemeſt thy chiefeſt wiſedome; for it is the diſpoſition of men before they be in Chriſt, before

fore they have experience of the wayes of God, before they bee regenerate, when they looke upon those wayes in others, they reckon them folly, *they are*
1 Cor. 2. 14 *foolish to every naturall man*; but when they are once in Christ, then are they wisdome unto them, that is, they reckon him the wisest man that excells most in those foolish courses, as before they deemed them. It is the Lords ex-
Deut. 4. 6 pression. *Deut.* 4. 6. *This shall be your wisdome before all people, to keepe my Lawes and Commandements.* Consider now what is that thou reckonest thy chiefest wisdome, before all people; whether that which before thou

thou thinkedſt folly and weaknes & hadſt a diſpoſition in thy heart to contemne and ſcorne? whether now ſetteſt thou it at a higher price, and doſt in truth thinke it thy wiſedome, and art willing that all the world ſhould know that thou thinkeſt ſo? By this you ſhall finde whether you make Chriſt your excellency, by conſidering whether your hearts goe this way or no, to ſeeke a vertue in the excellencies of Ieſus Chriſt, and ſo ſhew them forth to others; by examining whether this be thy chiefeſt wiſh, that thou maieſt be a Chriſtian; & that thou mayſt be found in Chriſt; that thou maiſt be able

Phil. 3. 7, 8

able to say as *Paul* sayd, *I reckon all other things as drosse, as base and vile things; onely to bee found in Christ, to bee cloathed in his righteousnesse*, to excell in the grace of his Spirit; this onely I prize a most excellent, and most worthy: And this is the first.

Math. 13. 44.

2. Secondly, consider what is thy chiefest *Treasure*, for you see *He that had gotten the field, he gave all that he had for it, and went away rejoycing*, for he reckoned it the greatest treasure, and worth all the rest. It is certaine; whosoever hath taken Christ, doth so esteeme of him, he reckons him to bee his chiefe treasure.

You

You will ſay, How ſhall I know it? *Obiect.*

Why, conſider what men doe with their treaſure, for it is certaine (as I ſaid before, of excellency, ſo) every man hath ſome treaſure or other; The pooreſt man that is, hath a treaſure, ſome thing that hee eſteemes of, which he makes account of. I aske not what thou art poſſeſt of, but what thou moſt eſteemeſt? for treaſures are as they are moſt eſteemed of. As wee ſay of jewels, the worth of them is according to mens fancies, according as they are eſteemed, ſo it is with every mans treaſure; One makes this thing his treaſure, another that. Now *Anſw.*

(ſay) conſider what thou makeſt thy treaſure; and you ſhall know what your Treaſure is, by theſe markes.

1. A man layes up his treaſure in the ſafeſt place. Then if Chriſt be thy treaſure, thou wilt lay him up in the innermoſt parts of thy heart, hee ſhall not dwell in thy tongue, hee ſhall be layd up in the cloſet of thy heart; hee ſhall not dwell in thy outward man, in thy underſtanding onely, but he ſhall be layd up in thy inward part; (that is) hee ſhall be pitched upon the very bottome of thy heart, and there he ſhall reſt, there thou wilt entertaine him.

2. Againe,

2. Againe, what a mans treaſure is that hee keepes with the greateſt care, with the greateſt warineſſe and ſolicitude. So wilt thou the Lord Ieſus, when once thou layeſt him up in thy heart, thou wilt not be carefull for any thing, ſo much as to keepe him ſafe; that is, to keepe the aſſurance of his favour ſafe, to keepe him neere thee, and thy ſelfe neere unto him: thy minde will bee more carefull of this, more than of all things elſe: Thou wilt then take heed of all things that may cauſe a diſtance betweene thee and him; thou wilt then take heed of whatſoever may looſe him, of whatſoever may

make a ſeparation between the Lord and thee; thou wilt bee more carefull for this, than any man is to keepe his health, or to keepe whatſoever it is that he makes his Treaſure.

3. Againe, whatſoever is thy treaſure that thou wilt moſt eſteeme, thou wilt ſet it at the higheſt rate above all things elſe. Before a man is in Chriſt there are many other things, which in truth, (howſoever hee pretend ſomething elſe) he prizeth at a higher rate than Chriſt; Worldly vanities before hee is in Chriſt, ſeeme great things to him; but when he is in him once, he lookes upon them with another eye. My beloved,

you

you know there was a time when, *God looked upon the creatures, and they were exceeding good,* even all that are in the world; thoſe things that men magnifie ſo much; I I ſay, there was a time when they were exceeding good: but ſinne hath blowed upon them, it hath blaſted the beautie and vigour of them, ſo that now when the Lord lookes upon them, this is the ſentence that is pronounced of them, this is the verdict that is now given of them, you know, in *Eccleſ.* 1. 14. *They are all vanitie and vexation of Spirit.* Conſider if thou bee able to looke on all theſe things (even the beſt things the Gen. 1. 31.

world hath) as things being but meere vanity: things wherein the Lord ſowed not mens happineſſe, and therefore thou canſt not thinke to reape it there. If you marke but the expreſſion the wiſe man uſeth in 1 *Eccleſ.* ſaith he; *All things under the Sunne are vanitie:* now there is a reaſon conteined in theſe words why they are but vanitie; for waters you know, they aſcend not higher than the fountaine, and they carry not any thing higher than their owne aſcent; ſo all the creatures that bee in the world, they *bee but under the Sunne*, therefore they cannot aſcend to that happineſſe which is above the Sunne

Sunne, nor carry you to that condition which is above, for happineſſe is above the Sunne, layde up in heaven. Therefore ſaith hee, all things under the Sunne if they bee conſidered to make a man happie, they are but vanitie. Now conſider whether thy judgment be ſo of them or no, whether it bee conformable to the holy *Ghoſt*, whether thou haſt this conceit of all other things, but the quite contrary conceit of Ieſus Chriſt; whether thou canſt thinke of him, as of one that is moſt excellent and thy chiefeſt treaſure, as one that is farre beyond all theſe, as one upon whom thy heart is pitched, as one

in whom all the happineſſe thou poſſeſſeſt is contained.

4 Againe, a mans treaſure is that which hee will bee at any coſt to get, hee will be at any paines to attaine it. It is that, on which his heart is beſtowed, and affections are occupied about. Is it ſo with thee when thou commeſt to Chriſt Ieſus? art thou willing to be at more coſt and paines to get him, than any thing beſides? Is thy heart and affections more beſtowed upon him? *For where a mans treaſure is, there his heart is.* I doe not aske whether thou beſtoweſt more time upon the matters of grace, than the

Math.6.21

duties

duties of thy calling; but, whether thou doſt them with more intention, whether thou beſtoweſt thy time and paines upon them, as upon that which thou reckoneſt thy treaſure, farre exceeding all other?

5. Fiftly, conſider whether thou art willing to part with any thing rather than with Chriſt Ieſus: for whatſoever is a mans treaſure, you know a man will part with any thing rather than it. Is it ſo with thee? hadſt thou rather part with any thing than with Chriſt? than to part with a good conſcience; with the graces of the Spirit, or with any thing that tends to holi-

neſſe to build thee up further in the worke of Gods grace? I ſay, conſider whether thy heart bee willing to part with any thing rather than with Chriſt; for thou ſhalt finde this, that Sathan and the world will cheapen Chriſt, and when they come to bidding, they will bid well. Conſider whether thy heart can give a peremptory anſwer to the world, and ſay thus, I will not ſell Chriſt, I will not ſell a good conſcience for any thing; yea, when Satan and the world bid higheſt, and tell thee as he did Chriſt, *that he will give thee all the riches and the glory in the world, if thou wilt part with Chriſt*; Con-

Math. 4. 8. 9.

ſider

ſider whether thy heart be ready to deny whatſoever hee offers to thee, (as hee will bee ſure to offer that which will be moſt ſutable to thy diſpoſition) whether thy heart hath taken this reſolution to it ſelfe; Chriſt is my chiefeſt treaſure, I will part with all therefore, I will part with libertie, with life, with goods, with credit, with pleaſures, with profits, with whatſoever is neere and deare unto me, rather than I will part with the Lord Ieſus. If this be thy hearts reſolution and minde, then Chriſt is thy chiefe treaſure; that's the ſecond thing.

3. Thirdly, conſider what

what is thy chiefe *joy* and delight, what is thy life, (I put them together, for that which is a mans chiefe joy indeed, is his life.) For we know life is nothing elſe but that joy which the heart hath, whereby it is nouriſhed and fed as it were; for life is not to have body and ſoule joyned together, to bee a living man, in that ſenſe we uſually take life; for if that were life, then thoſe in hell ſhould not be ſaid to die the death; for you know in hell there is a conjunction of ſoule and body, and yet men are not ſaid to live there; for it is death which is the puniſhment of ſinne: and indeed you ſhall finde that there

there is ſomething a mans heart cleaves unto, wherein he rejoyceth, which is the ſame with his life. Therefore looke as the Soule enlivens the body, ſo the conjunction of the preſent things which hee reckons his joy, that is, his life, enliven his ſoule, hee cannot live without them. Now if Chriſt be thy chiefe joy, thou wilt finde this, that thou canſt not live without him, as men are wont to ſay of their delights; Such a man cannot live without ſuch a thing; ſo it is true of every man that hath taken Chriſt, hee is not able to live without him. This life is no life, and therefore if there bee but a ſeparation be-

betweene thee and Chriſt, if a mans conſcience be as it were clouded for a time, he findes no reſt, hee doth as the Spouſe in the *Canticles*;

Cant. 5. 6. *She ſeekes from one place to another, and gives her ſelfe no reſt, till ſhe find him*, and why? becauſe it was *hee whom her ſoule loved.* So you ſhall find, Beloved, whatſoever it is that your ſoules love, whatſoever you make your chiefe joy, you will take no reſt, but as farre as you love and enjoy it. Therefore for the finding of this, whether Chriſt bee thy life and thy chiefe joy, conſider what it is that thy thoughts feed upon; every wicked man, every man that is out of

of Chriſt, there is ſome-thing that his thoughts feed upon, ſome things there are, in contemplation of which the ſoule ſola-ceth it ſelfe; ſome plea-ſures that are paſt, preſent, or to come: the very thin-king of theſe are the grea-teſt joy of his heart, hee roules them under his tongue; even as a Servant that hath got ſome dainty bit out of his Maſters pre-ſence, and eates it in a cor-ner, ſo the ſoule of a man hath out of Chriſt ſome ſe-cret, ſome ſtolen, ſome un-lawfull delights, that it feedes upon and delights in: Conſider therefore well with thy ſelfe, what breakefaſt thy morning thoughts

thoughts have (that I may ſo ſay) what breakefaſt they have every morning, what is that *Pabulum*, that food of the ſoule, wherewith thy thoughts and affections are nouriſhed and refreſhed from day to day; whether it be ſome carnall pleaſure, ſome reflecting on thy ſtate, upon thy wealth, upon thy friends; or whether it bee on Chriſt. See (as *David* exerciſed it) whether bee they *thy*
Pſal. 42.8. *ſongs in the night?* All carnall men have ſomething paſt whereby they comfort themſelves, ſomething preſent whereby they cheare up their hearts; ſomething to come, ſomething in hope. So every man

man that is in Chriſt, hee hath the comforts of the Spirit, the meditation of the priviledges that hee hath in Chriſt, the hope of Gods favour; Theſe are his appointed food, theſe are the things that his ſoule feeds on in ſecret; yea the very workes that hee doth, that ſeeme to bee the hardeſt part of a Chriſtians life, the very workes that he doth in ſerving the Lord from day to day, even that is his meat and his drinke; that is, it is ſweet and acceptable to his ſoule, as meate and drinke is to the hunger and thirſt of his body. Now conſider with thy ſelfe whether it bee ſo with thee; whether that which

which is thy continuall feaſt, without which thou canſt not live, be Chriſt; or the aſſurance thou haſt, that he is thine and thou art his; whether it bee the priviledges thou haſt in him; and the things that belong to the Kingdome of God; See whether theſe bee thy life, the things without which thou couldſt not live; or whether it be ſomthing els, ſome ſtollen delights, ſome unlawfull pleaſures, ſome thing elſe that thy ſoule and affections are ſet upon. This is the next thing by which thou mayeſt try thy ſelfe whether thou belong to Chriſt or no, to conſider whether he bee thy chiefe joy, whether thy ſoule bee moſt

moſt filled and ſatisfied with him. And this is the third thing.

4. The fourth is; to know whether hee bee thy chiefe *Refuge*; If thou be one that hath tooke him and received him, I ſay, hee is thy chiefe refuge. For every man hath ſome refuge, ſome caſtle or other to which his ſoule retires in all difficult and doubtfull caſes, by reaſon of that indigency, that inſufficiencie to which the nature of man is ſubject. There is ſomething that hee muſt have to leane unto, (marke it) for mankind is like that generation which the Wiſeman ſpeakes of: You know it is ſayd of the Connies, *They*

are

Pro. 30. 26

are a generation not ſtrong; and what then? and *therefore they have their burrowes to hide themſelves in.* I ſay, ſuch is the generation of mankinde, he is a weake creature, a generation not ſtrong, therefore there is ſomething that hee muſt leane to, ſomething out of himſelfe, ſome ſufficiencie beſides himſelfe; ſome ſtrong hold, ſome refuge every man hath; I ſay every man hath ſome refuge or other, whither hee thinkes his ſoule may go, and there he may have ſuccour in caſes dangerous and in troubles. Now conſider what is thy refuge, whither thy heart runnes in all ſuch caſes, to what wing, to what ſtrong

ſtrong hold: In dangerous caſes, you ſee every creature hath ſome refuge or other: The Child runnes to his Mother. The Chickens runne to the Henne. The Fox to his earth, the Conneys to their burrowes: ſo every creature to their ſeverall corners and receptacles proper to them: I ſay, ſo it is with every man, ſo that every one of you to whom I ſpeake, there is ſomewhat that is a ſecret refuge to which your hearts fly. Now conſider whether that bee Chriſt or ſomewhat elſe. A covetous man (or rather a man of this world) he hath wealth for his ſtrong hold, in which

which his heart comforts it ſelfe; well, ſaith he, what change of time ſo ever come, yet I have an eſtate to hold me up; and when hee is ill ſpoken of abroad, yet he applaudes himſelfe with that he hath at home; The Courtiers, they have the Princes favour, that is their refuge wherein they comfort themſelves; Thoſe that are given to Company, they have good fellowes, ſuch as they that are their companions, and ſo long as they ſpeake well of them, they care not who ſpeake ill of them; Some have a refuge of this kind, ſome of another, every man hath his refuge. If you will looke into the

the Scriptures, you ſhall ſee *Davids* refuge, in any diſtres upon any occaſion; at *Ziglag he comforteth himſelfe in the Lord,* his heart did flye to him, as the chickens flye to the henne, there he comforted himſelfe, there hee ſhrowded himſelfe, there he encouraged himſelſe in the Lord. When hee fled from his ſonne *Abſolon,* was not the Lord his refuge? *Yet* (ſaith hee) *he is my buckler and my ſtrong hold,* Pſalme 3. which was made upon that occaſion. What was *Iacobs* refuge when he fled from his brother *Eſau?* Did not he goe to the Lord, and ſeeke to him by Prayer? *Lord, thou haſt ſayd thou wilt doe mee good,*

1 Sam. 30. 6.

Gen. 31. 12.

good, now I fly unto thee, I beſeech thee performe thy promiſe, thou art my refuge. Conſider others now, what was their refuge: *Iudas*, when he had betrayed his Maſter Chriſt, and his conſcience was upon him for it; he goes to the high prieſts and brings the ſilver to them, Why, ſaith he, you ſet me aworke, you are the authors of it, and I hope to finde ſome comfort from you; you ſee he found little comfort in his minde, yet that was his refuge. The Kings of *Iſrael* and *Iuda* when they were diſtreſſed, they fled to *Ægypt* and to *Aſſur*, to this or that help, which (the Lord ſayd) were broken reeds to them, but

but yet that was their refuge. This is the manner of every unregenerate man that is in his naturall eſtate, ſome refuge hee hath; friends, or wealth, or credit, or the favour of the Prince, ſomething or other it is: and if hee be deſtitute and have no refuge (as ſometimes it ſo falls out) then his heart is ſhaken as the leaves of the forreſt, Their *hearts were ſhakē even for feare of the King* of *Aram, as the leaves are ſhaken in the forreſt*; and why? Becauſe they knew not how to defend themſelves: they had no refuge to flye to. So you ſee it was with *Belſhazars* heart; ſo *Achitophel*; and ſo *Saul*; when he ſees Iſaiah 7. 2.

that he must die the next day, and that there was no refuge for him: then I say their hearts sanke and dyed within them. And now consider how it is with thee what is the refuge to which thy heart flyeth, and which thy heart makes most account of (for every man thinkes with himselfe, change of time may come, and what shall bee my comfort, what shall be my strong hold at that time.) Dost thou flye to Iesus Christ? is he thy succour when thy heart is dejected at any time and faints within thee? from which fountaine dost thou fetch thy comfort? Dost thou flye to Christ, to comfort thy selfe in him, when

when thou art in a doubtful caſe, that concernes thee as much as thy life: whither doſt thou goe for counſell and direction? is it to Chriſt to beſeech him to guide thee, to direct thee, when thou art preſſed hard? whither doth thy heart goe for ſuccour and for helpe to keepe thy ſelfe ſafe? Is it to Chriſt, or to ſomewhat elſe? My beloved, I aſſure you this, that a carnall man that is not in Chriſt, in theſe times of diſtreſſe knowes not whither to go; he dares not goe to Chriſt, for hee feares that it ſhall be asked him, upon what acquaintance? for he hath beene a ſtranger to the Lord, hee was never acquainted with

him: but a carnal man that is out of Christ, hee goes to his muses, hee goes to his farmes, he goes to his bushes, as the hunted Hare was wont to doe, to goe to the places that shee used when shee lived quiet, thither shee flyes when shee knowes not how to escape: so in that fashion it is with men, looke what things they were wont, to which their hearts had recourse in time of prosperity, and what their haunts have beene; to those bushes they flye: But alas! they are but bushes, such as will not defend them. But now the Christian on the other side, the muse, the farme as it were (it is but to expresse it

it to you) that his ſoule is acquainted with, the ſtrong hold that hee was wont to flye unto, upon every ſeverall evill, upon every ordinary doubt, upon every dejection, diſcouragement and fainting of heart; hee was wont to flye to Chriſt, and there hee was wont to finde comfort, and thither hee goes in time of greateſt difficultie in the day of death, and there hee findes comfort. Conſider if he be thy chiefe refuge, for if thy heart hath taken him as he is thy chiefe excellency, thy chiefe joy, thy chiefe treaſure; ſo hee will be thy chiefeſt refuge, yea when all things elſe are taken away, yet that cover re-

maines safe: Suppose thou bee in prison, suppose thy credit bee taken away, (I meane) thy worldly credit (for the other credit cannot bee taken away from any man that hath Christ:) suppose thy life bee taken away, suppose thou be stript of all that thou hast; yet thou hast Christ for thy chiefe refuge, and thou thinkest so, and thy heart is satisfied with it. As *Paul* saith, when he was a prisoner, when hee was naked, when hee was destitute, when he was stript of all, yet (saith he) *I know whom I have trusted*: As if hee should say, yet I have him safe, yet my cover is over my head, yet I am safe in my

2 Tim. 2. 12.

my caſtle, I have choſen him, I have him in death, yea then Chriſt hee is advantage, he is a cover, a caſtle, and a refuge.

5. Laſt of all: conſider whom thou ſetteſt up for thy chiefeſt *Commander*, who it is to whom thou giveſt the chiefe command in thine heart. You will ſay how ſhall I know that? *Queſt.* Why (my beloved) hee whom a man feareth moſt, and loveth moſt, that is hee whoſe friendſhip above all others hee would leaſt loſe, and whoſe diſlike and ſeparation he doth moſt feare, certainely he will be moſt obedient to him, he will be moſt obſervant of him. Art thou ſo to Chriſt? take all *Anſw.*

the things in the world, if thou ſet up him, as him whom thou moſt feareſt and loveſt, thou wilt moſt obey him: So againe, hee whom thou thinkeſt can doe thee the greateſt good, and the greateſt hurt, him thou wilt moſt obey; if thou thinkeſt in good earneſt that Chriſt is able to doe it, then thou wilt moſt obey him. As for example, if thou looke to any man in the world, a man that is out of Chriſt, hee thinkes that the favour or the wealth of the King, can doe him more good and more hurt, than the favour, or the loſſe of the favour of Chriſt; He thinkes that wealth, or credit, or ſomething elſe, (many

ny things there are that he thinkes) can doe him good and more hurt: therefore hee more reſpects their command, than the command of Chriſt; but a man that ſets up him for his chiefe *Commander*, hee regards nothing elſe when it comes to croſſe it, when it comes to thwart any command of Chriſt, becauſe he ſaith thus to himſelfe in his heart in ſecret: It is the Lord that can doe the greateſt good, and the greateſt hurt, therefore I care for no more. So *Naboth* he cared not for *Ahabs* wrath. So *Mordecay* cared not for *Hamans* diſpleaſure: ſo did the Apoſtles, they cared not for the High Eſter 3.2.

Dan. 3. 16, 17, 18.

Prieſts, nor what they could doe, *Act.* 4. So did the three children (as you call them *they cared not for the fiery furnace* of *Nabucadnezar*, nor for all that hee was able to doe; and why? becauſe they thought that Chriſt, that God was able to doe them more hurt, and more good. Now take any commander in the world, when you regard not the puniſhment, nor the reward that he is able to inflict or to give you, his authoritie is gone; Now when you ſet up Chriſt, and thinke ſo of Chriſt, you are ready to obey him, and obey him rather than any other. Therefore conſider with thy ſelfe this, & conſi-

der

der ſeriouſly: aske thy heart the queſtion, what is that thou ſetteſt up to bee thy chiefeſt Commander? For there are three great Commanders in the world, that divide all mankinde betweene them almoſt: And that is wealth, and eſtate: worldly credit and honour, to live in eſteeme; pleaſures, and delight. Now thinke with thy ſelfe when any of theſe three great Commanders come with any command, contrary to that which Chriſt commands, thinke with thy ſelfe what thou wilt doe in ſuch a caſe, what waſt thou wont to doe, looke to paſt experience; looke backe to thy former wayes, ſee what

what thou waſt wont to doe; thinke with thy ſelfe when ſuch a Commandcomes, what thy heart reaſons upon; if concupiſcence, if a ſtrong luſt, if a ſtrong impetuous deſire come, and bid thee to doe ſomething, which is contrary to that which Chriſt would have thee to doe, what art thou ready to doe in ſuch a caſe? If thy profit, the maintenance of thy eſtate, thy liberty, thy wealth, thy convenience in this world come and command thee to doe one thing, and thy conſcience (which is Chriſts vicegerent) come in his ſtead, and command thee another thing, what art

art thou ready to doe in that caſe? So when thy credit, thy honour, and reputation, thy vaine glory ſhall come and bid thee doe one thing, and Chriſt ſhall bid thee doe another, what is thy reſolution, what art thou wont to doe? By this thou ſhalt know whether thou ſetteſt up Chriſt, as the chiefe Commander in thy heart or no, whether thou giveſt him thy chiefe throne, whether thou exalteſt him for God in thy heart; you know when you exalt him for God, every thing then yeelds, if in truth he be ſet up for God in thy heart: Therefore conſider what it is that thy heart ſets higheſt

eſt, whether thou exalteſt him moſt, whether (when any of theſe threatning, crying commands come) thou canſt give them an abſolute deniall, and ſay with thy ſelfe, I will not obey you; and if they threaten impriſonment, or diſgrace, and loſſe of life, and if I doe not obey ſuch a luſt, I ſhall be wrung and pincht for it, I ſhall loſe ſuch delights: well, I am reſolved to beare all this. On the other ſide, when they ſhall come with faire proffers, you ſhall have this honour, and this advancement, and this convenience: If thy heart can ſay now, I will have none of you, for I ſee it is a command contrary to

to his that is above, whom I have ſet up for my chiefe Commander, whom I reſolve to obey, whom I take to bee greater than all the friendſhip in the world, than all the profits, pleaſures, and credits in the world; I ſay thus examine thy ſelfe what thy heart is toward Chriſt, what it is to his command; and (let me touch that by the way) thou muſt alſo ſhew thy obedience to Chriſt, in thy obedience to others. My beloved, there are indifferent things, that are in themſelves not of moment one way or other, whether wee doe them or not doe them; and though the omiſſion of them in themſelves

ſelves be nothing, yet when it ſhall bee of contempt, and neglect of thoſe that are ſet in ſuperiour place over you, in ſuch a caſe you ought not to doe it: this is a rule in divinity, that indifferent things may bee omitted except in two caſes, in caſe of ſcandall, and in caſe of neglect, and contempt of authority: therefore when there is neglect, when men ſhew contempt, for that cauſe it is to bee done, though for the other it is not to be done. This I touch but by the way, that you may conſider it in your particular occaſion.

Now my beloved, you ſee theſe five things, by which you may know if you

you have tooke Chriſt, or no: ye know when a man comes to examine himſelfe whether he be a fit man, a man that hath any right to come to the Lords Table, hee muſt conſider whether he be in Chriſt, otherwiſe he hath nothing to doe either with this priviledge, or with any other. Now to be in Chriſt, there muſt (as I ſayd) goe a double act, there muſt bee one on thy owne ſide, there muſt bee one act on thy part to take him; and there muſt bee an act on his part, there goes out a ſtrength and a vertue from him by which hee takes thee & comprehends thee. The time is paſt, and I cannot proceed further; onely

onely remember this that hath beene ſayd to you, and examine your ſelves by it, whether you be in the truth, whether you make Chriſt your chiefe *Excellencie*, your chiefe *Treaſure*, your chiefe *Ioy*, your chiefe *Refuge*, your chiefe *Commander*; if thou finde that thou haſt done this, if thou finde thy heart wrought to ſuch an act as this, to take Chriſt in ſuch a manner, then thou haſt Chriſt, thou art in him, then thou haſt a right in him, and mayſt come with comfort: but if thou have it not, then I muſt charge every one of you in the name of Chriſt Ieſus (in whoſe authority we come) that you meddle not

not with ſuch holy myſteries. My beloved you know what I have often told you, there is a neceſſitie layd on men to come to the Sacrament : you know he that neglected the *Paſſeover was to bee cut off from the people.* It was a very great ſinne : ſo it is to omit the Sacrament : you have diverſe Sacraments every Tearme, and if your buſineſſe hinder you from one you may come to another ; yea there is a neceſſitie lyes upon you to come, but yet wee muſt give you a double charge, one that you omit it not ; and another that you come not hither unleſſe you bee in Chriſt ; What haſt thou to doe

Levit. 23. 29.

doe that art a profane perſon, thou haſt nothing to doe with Chriſt, thou art yet a ſtranger to him, that thou ſhouldeſt thruſt in to the Lords Table: thou ought'ſt not to doe it, if thou doſt, *thou eateſt and drinkeſt thine owne damnation*, in ſtead of thy ſalvation.

1 Cor. 11. 29.

The Second Sermon.

Vſe. AND ſo now we come to the Vſe, and that is, that there is an Act of Chriſt to make

make an union betwixt us, that we may be his, and he ours: there's an act of his, that is, there is a certaine power or vertue come from him, even as there doth from the Load-ſtone to the iron, that drawes thee to him; there goes out a vertue and power from him as to the woman that touched the hemme of his garment, that healed her bloudy iſſue; ſuch a power goes out from Chriſt to every man, that is in him. And as you muſt examine it by your owne act, ſo in the ſecond place you are to examine it by this; conſider whether there hath gone out any ſuch power from Chriſt to take and comprehend thee:

thee: For you muſt know this, that when once we are in Chriſt, then there goes forth an effectu ll Almighty power from him, which doth not make a little light al eration on the ſuperficies of the heart, but it alters the very frame of it, it turnes the very rudder of the heart, ſo that a mans courſe is to a quite contrary point of the compaſſe; it is ſuch an alteration as doth breed in us, not ſome good conception onely of purpoſes and deſires which many have, which when they come to the birth, there is no ſtrength to bring them forth: but hee gives to us a power and ſtrength to perform them: That is, he doth

doth not put upon us a waſhie colour of profeſſion, but hee dyeth us in graine with grace and holineſſe. And therefore conſider whether thou haſt found any experience of ſuch a power going out from Chriſt to thy heart; This my beloved, differs from common graces, from the common forme of godlineſſe which is in the world, as much as life differs from the picture, or the ſubſtance from the ſhaddow; as a through performance differs from a proffer, or an offer: or that which hath ſinewes & vigor, differs from that which is weake and powerleſſe. Therefore this power of Chriſt which he puts

puts forth and diffuſeth into the heart of every man that is in him, is called the *Kingdome.* And the *Kingdome of* Chriſt *is not in word, but in power:* That is, when once hee rules but as a King, he exerciſeth a Kingdome there, and hee ſaith not onely to us; I will have ſuch a thing done, they are not weake and powerleſſe commands that he gives to the heart of a man that he dwels in; but ſaith he, *The Kingdome of God is not in word but in power*; that is, there goes an efficacie with thoſe commands, there goes a great ſtrength with them, that brings every thought, and every rebellious affection into ſubjection

1 Cor. 4. 24.

jection to it; and therefore consider I say, if thou wouldest have these vertues, whether thou bee in Christ, whether any such power hath gone out from Christ to thy heart.

Quest. But you will say, what is this power and vertue, and in what manner is it infused into the heart of man, for this seems to be a narration of a thing a farre off?

Answ. My beloved, we will explaine it as well as we can to you; even as you see an Artificer working with his instrument, there goes a certaine vertue out from that Art which is in his minde, and guides the instrument to make this or that, the which without it

could not bee done, when hee makes any artificiall thing, as a knife, or a ſword; or when the Potter faſhions the Pot, his hand is ſet on worke, and there is a certaine inviſible paſſage, a certaine ſecret influence of the Art that goes along with his hand, that brings forth ſuch an artificiall thing; or even as you ſee the members move; a man moving his arme, or his hand, or any part of his body, there goes a certaine vertue from his will, a certaine ſecret power, efficacie, and command that ſtirres them this way or that way; the thing wee ſee not, yet we ſee it in the effect; or as you ſee it in the crea-

creature, you ſee the creatures that God hath made, they have all their ſeverall inſtincts, by which they are inſtigated to doe this or that; you ſee the birds are inſtigated to make their neſts in ſuch a faſhion, at ſuch a ſeaſon; ſo every creature according to his ſeverall kinde. There goes out from God who is the author of nature to theſe workes of nature, a certaine vertue that puts them on, and inſtigates them to this or that: and as you ſee an arrow that is ſhot by the Archer: there goes a vertue together with it, that directs it juſt to ſuch a marke, ſo farre, and no further. So after this manner

there comes a power from Chriſt to his members; as ſoone as a man is in him, there comes ſuch a ſecret divine, unexpreſſable efficacie that workes upon the heart of him in whom hee dwels. And therefore the conjunction betweene him and us, is compared to that which is betweene the ſoule and the body, that acts and ſtirres us to and fro, according to its will and pleaſure, ſuch an efficacie ſhalt thou find, if thou belong unto him, and therefore conſider if there be ſuch a thing or no.

Queſt. But you will ſay, to what purpoſe is this efficacy, and what doth it in my heart when it comes there?

Why,

Why, I will tell thee what it doth; it is expreſſed in plaine termes, 2 *Cor.* 5.17. *Whoſoever is in Chriſt is made a new creature*; That is the worke it effects. it is ſuch a power and efficacie as makes thee a new creature; That is, it breakes in peeces the old building, it quite takes away the firſt print; As when a man comes to make a new ſtampe, the firſt muſt bee removed. So that this efficacie that goes out from Chriſt, it hath a double vertue in thy ſoule, to weare out the old ſtampe, to breed a death of the old nature, of the old man, to ruine and breake downe the old building, and to ſet

Anſw.

up a new one; and that the Scripture calls a new creature: and therefore conſider with thy ſelfe, whether thou finde ſuch a vertue as hath put thy heart into ſuch a new fraime, as hath moulded it all together, and hath put it into another faſhion than it was, conſider whether all in thee bee new.

Queſt. You will ſay, this is ſtrange, muſt all be new?

Anſw. My beloved, you know the words they are cleare; 2 Cor. 5. 17. *Old things are paſſed away, all things become new.* (In the ſame place which I quoted before) that as the command was in the offering of the Paſſeover, not a jot of old leaven, but wee muſt

muſt part with it; Now this is the nature of leaven, it is alwayes purging out, and it will be purging out while we are here, oncly the efficacie and ſtrength thereof remaines not. Then thinke with thy ſelfe, is all new in me? looke what naturall diſpoſition I have had: looke what naturall luſts and deſires I have had, ſee what acts I was wont to doe, what old haunts and cuſtomes I have had, looke what old company I kept, what old courſes I tooke, what my tract hath beene, is all this altered and every thing become new? (for, ſaith hee, it muſt *bee a new creature*, a new nature:) That is, it is not enough for 2 Cor. 5. 17.

a man to have a new course for a fit, to have new purposes and a new change that comes like flashes, I say, that is not enough; you may have many new things in you, that may bee in old hearts, *like peeces of new cloth in old garments*, that will doe thee no good at all; the Lord regards not that: *like new wine in old vessels*, so it is where there are some new things, that are good things in themselves; in a carnall and old heart, they are not fit for the heart, and therefore they never stay long there: So saith the text, *Put a new peece into an old garment, and it makes the rent greater.*

Math. 9. 16 17.

There-

Therefore all muſt bee new; I ſay there muſt be a new nature, that theſe new things may be there: even as the ſeverall creatures are in their ſeverall elements, as the elements are in their owne place, as the plants are in their proper ſoyle, as the branches are upon their owne roote. For then they floriſh, then they hold out, then they continue; Therefore ſee whether this vigor, this efficacie, this vertue hath gone out from Chriſt into thy heart; whether it hath not onely renewed all in thee, but alſo hath given thee a new nature; That is, whether it hath wrought ſuch a change in thee, that all the

wayes of godlineſſe and new obedience, become in a meaſure naturall to thee, ſo that thou canſt doe them cheerefully, even as wee heare, and ſee, and doe naturall actions, and that thou doſt them without wearineſſe: for you know, things that are naturall we are not wearie of them; And ſo thou wilt doe them conſtantly, for what is naturall, ſtayes and abides by us, that it out-growes and out-wearies what ever is in us beſide, Now hath there a vertue gone out from Chriſt, that hath wrought all this in you, that hath effected all this in you, that hath made all new: hath not onely done ſo, but

hath

hath made it naturall to thee? But you will ſay, muſt it needs be ſo, cannot Chriſt take and comprehend me, but there muſt be this wonderfull change wrought, who can be ſaved then? I have then but little hope, when I am upon my death-bed, and then ſhall looke upon my old nature, and finde no ſuch worke as this wrought upon me. Beloved, I beſeech you conſider this, that there is a neceſſitie of it: It is ſo, and it muſt be ſo, and except you have it, you cannot bee ſaved; you ſee the words in the Scriptures are moſt cleare, *Whoſoever is in Chriſt is a new creature*: Doe but conſider whether

Queſt.

Anſw.

2 Cor. 5.

ther it bee so or no; there
2 Pet. 3. 13. must be *a new heaven, and a new earth*; You see that was the great promise that was to be fulfilled in our times of the *Gospell*. Is there not a new priesthood; is there not a new covenant, and hath not the Lord said, there must be *a new heaven, and a new earth*? That is, new graces from heaven, and a new company of men wrought on, and changed by those graces? Shall those that are borne of old *Adam*, receive a power from him, to make them like to him, to carry his Image, to bee corrupt, carnall, and sinfull as hee is: And doe you not thinke that the New *Adam*, the Second

Second *Adam*, ſhall have as much efficacie in him to make thoſe new creatures, that are in him, that come to him? Certainely there is as much power, life, and vigor in the new *Adam*, to change every man that is in him, that comes to him, to make them new creatures, as in the old *Adam*, to make them like to him: Beſides, hath not Chriſt ſayd plainely, I came not into the world to ſave ſoules onely, that is not my onely buſineſſe and errand for which I came into the world: but (ſaith hee) *I came to purifie a people to my ſelfe, zealous of good workes:* in the 2 *Tit.* Now if that were the end of Chriſts

Tit. 2. 14.

Chriſts comming, doſt thou thinke that hee will loſe his end? Wherefore its impoſſible, that any man ſhould bee ſaved, or have part in Chriſt, that hee ſhould bee in Chriſt, and Chriſt in him, except his heart bee purified ſo, as to be zealous of good workes. If Chriſt dwell in thy heart, thou mayeſt eaſily know it; for doſt thou thinke, that Chriſt will dwell in a foule and uncleane place? hath hee not Heb. 1. 13. *pure eyes?* And therefore it is certaine whereſoever hee dwells, that place muſt bee *a fit Temple for him to dwell in*; Wherefore of neceſſitie he muſt cleanſe thy heart, hee muſt faſhion it, and

and keepe it pure, cleane, and ſweet, ſo as it may be a fit Temple for him and his Spirit to dwell and delight in. Beſides, doth hee not looke to his glory in all thoſe that belong to him? he hath many eyes to looke upon them as it were, there are *many ſpectators men and Angels*, to ſee what they are, and how they behave themſelves. If he ſhould have a company of men to belong unto him that are carnall, perverſe, and worldly minded, that have crooked wayes like other men, would this be for his honour? would it not bee ſayd, Like men, Like Maſter? would it not reflect upon him? Certainely it would; 1 Cor. 4. 9.

would; and therefore the Lord ſo orders it, that thoſe whom hee hath redeemed, *ſhall be holy in all manner of converſation*: Saith he, you *muſt bee as I am*, elſe it will be for my diſhonour, *As I am holy,* 1 Pet. 1. 15 *ſo every one of you muſt bee holy, in all manner of converſation.* Therefore let no man deceive himſelfe, to thinke hee can goe away and yet bee in Chriſt, and bee ſaved through Chriſt and the mercies of God in Chriſt, when there goes out no ſuch vertue and power from Chriſt to change him to worke on him, to alter him, to make him another creature. And therefore I beſeech you in the examining

examining of this, (for its a matter of great moment) to consider with your selves, If this be wrought in you or no; whether you find any experiment and effect of this mighty power, efficacie, and vertue: and let me bring you a little to particulars; Hath there gone out a vertue from him to enable thee to beleeve? There is a faith required in the *Deity*, there is a faith required in the *promises* of God, and there is a faith required in the *providence* of God, to thinke that every particular thing is ordered by it; There is also a faith in all the *threatnings* of God: Now for the manner of propounding; when the Scripture

Scripture comes to propound any thing, it propounds it thus, and no more: as you ſee in *Moyſes*, he writes nothing but,
Gen. 1.1. *In the beginning God made heaven and earth, &c.* And ſo the Apoſtles write; Such a thing was done,
Math. 1. Luke 1.2. *Ieſus Chriſt was borne of the Virgin Mary: Thus and thus he did.* Now when the naked object is propounded, other writers what they deliver or write is rationall: They uſe Reaſons and arguments to convince men of thoſe things which they deliver; but when the Scripture ſets downe any propoſitions of faith, it doth but barely propound them, for there is the Majeſty

jeſty and authority of God in them, to confirme them.

But now here you will demand, (the propoſition being but nakedly layd downe in the Scriptures) what will enable a man to beleeve it? *Queſt.*

I anſwer: that certainly there is a mighty power that goes out from God and Chriſt, that enables thee to beleeve with efficacy; ſo that when the object is ſet before thee, there goes out a power from Chriſt to worke faith in thy heart, whereby thou truely beleeveſt it, and ſo it appeares in thy life: Wee thinke we beleeve thoſe things, but our lives doe manifeſt the contrary; namely, That there is not a powerfull faith *Anſw.*

faith wrought in us; for all the errours of our lives (though we obſerve them not) ariſe from hence, that theſe Principles are not throughly beleeved: if they were, it could not be, that there ſhould bee ſuch inconſequences in the lives of men. Therefore conſider if this faith be wrought in thee, whether ſuch a power hath gone out, to worke ſuch a faith, that hath changed thy whole courſe, as it will doe, if it bee once wrought in thee, by the power of Chriſt: So alſo conſider, whether there hath a vertue gone out from him to worke love in thy heart to the Lord; for otherwiſe it is cer-

Answ. I answer; Two waies in the Sacrament, one way is the very repetition, the very renewing the covenant, the very doing it over againe, the resolution of taking him, (for there is a mutuall covenant, you know, betweene Christ and us,) it is confirmed to us in the Sacrament, hee confirmes his, and wee confirme ours, as the friendship betweene *Ionathan* and *David* was increased by the renewing of the covenant, or else why was it repeated? The very repetition of the act intends the habit, the habit is increased by the repetition of the act, though it were no more; so the renewing of the covenant exerciseth

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thy faith, it ſets a worke thy faith and thy love, when thou commeſt to receive the Sacrament, the very intention is increaſed: but this is not all. There is another thing in the Sacrament that much increaſeth it, and that is a thing I would have you chiefely to take notice of; That is the very Sacrament it ſelfe, the elements of bread and wine delivered to thee, with the very words of the Miniſter, *Take and eate, this is my body, that was broken for thee; Take and drinke, this is my blond, that was ſhed, &c.* For when theſe words are ſpoken to us if wee did conſider well of them, and thinke thus with our ſelves; Theſe words

1 Cor. 11. 24, 25.

words that the Lord himſelfe hath appointed the Miniſter to ſpeake (for therin is the force of them that they are of the Lords owne inſtitution) therefore the ſtrength of every Sacrament lies in the inſtitution; That is a rule in Divinitie: the Papiſts themſelves, who have added five other Sacraments, cannot deny but that every Sacrament muſt have an immediate inſtitution from Chriſt himſelfe, even from his owne mouth, or elſe there is no ſtrength in it; ſo that even as it is with all things that are ſymbols of other things (as take markes in fields that ſtand for the diviſion of ſeverall mens rights; take

coũters that ſtand for thouſands and Hundreds: the very eſſence of theſe things ſtands in the very inſtitution of them;) So in the Sacramẽt, except theſe words were from the Lords owne mouth that deliveredit, this very delivering of the bread and wine, being a ſigne to you of the forgiveneſſe of your ſins, except the Lord had thus inſtituted it, there had beene no force in it. I ſay conſider, they are but words that the Miniſter ſpeakes not in an ordinary courſe, but he is appointed by the Lord himſelfe to ſpeake them; & now when theſe words make a new impreſſion upon thy heart, it addes an intention to thy faith

faith and love. For example, (to make it a little more cleare to you, that you may underſtand it diſtinctly.) The Lord hath ſaid this, he will forgive the ſinnes of all thoſe that come unto him, hee will forgive them that forſake their ſins, and take Chriſt Ieſus, and love and feare him for the time to come. The Lord might have ſuffered it to goe thus in generall, that he hath delivered it unto you and no more; But he thought good to go further and ſay thus to mankind: Its true, I have ſaid it, but I will not content my ſelfe with that, but will adde certaine ſeales & ſymbolls, certaine externall ſignes, that thou ſhalt ſee

and looke on; and I ſay to thee, this covenant have I made with thee, and when thou ſeeſt the bread and wine delivered by the Miniſter, know this, that the thing that thou ſeeſt is a witneſſe betweene thee and me: That as it was ſaid by *Laban* and *Iacob* when they made a covenant, *This ſtone be witneſſe betweene us*: And God ſaid to *Noah*, *When I looke upon the rainebow, it ſhall be a ſigne that I will deſtroy the earth no more after this manner*, when the Lord hath ſaid it and hath appointed this outward Symboll that thine eyes looke upon, I remember the covenant, and this as a ſigne betweene us, this ſhall bind mee

Gen. 31. 48.
Gen. 9. 13, 14. 15.

mee to it and him likewiſe. Now when this is done a new, (it may bee every moneth) this is a wondrous great mercy, this is a marvellous great helpe (if it bee rightly underſtood) to ſtrengthen our faith. Doth it not helpe us, when we ſee the Rainebowe which the Lord hath appointed to put him in minde of his covenant? *I will remember my covenant, when I looke on the Bowe in the cloud it ſhall confirme mee, and I will not breake my covenant to deſtroy the world with a flood*; So this adminiſtration of the Sacrament, when the Lord lookes upon it, hee cannot but remember his promiſe and his covenant,

Gen. 9. 14. 15.

of pardoning our ſinnes; And when thou lookeſt on it, thou art aſſured of it, for hee hath ſaid it; it ſhall be a ſigne and a witneſſe betweene us; Now I ſay that new impreſſion that theſe words (thus contrived and underſtood, & delivered by the Miniſter) make upon the heart, intends our faith and love; as indeed it is a great matter to have it ſpoken to us by a Miniſter of the Goſpel, ſent from Chriſt, from his owne mouth; *Take and eate, this is my body that is broken for you: and this is my blood that was ſhed for you as for many, for the remiſsion of ſinnes.* This is the fourth qualification that is required, that our faith and love

1 Cor. 11. 24, 25.

bee

bee intended, and our union increaſed; that the will, reſolution, and purpoſe of taking Chriſt for our Lord, receive more degrees; that ſo we may be more faſt and firmely united and knit to him; which I ſay is done partly by the repetition on both ſides (for the very repetition doth it,) and partly by a new impreſſion that theſe words, (*take, eate, &c.*) make on the ſoule. Now I adde the laſt thing which is required, (ſtill remember the maine thing wee are upon, that it is not enough for thee to bee in Chriſt, but if thou wilt bee a worthy receiver, thou muſt have theſe foure qualifications in thee, that I have named al-

ready, Thou muſt reconcile thy ſelfe anew, thou muſt rub off the ruſt from thy ſoule which it hath gathered, thou muſt recover the diſtance that is growne between God and thee; Thou muſt adde an intending and an increaſe; Thou muſt adde more degrees to thy faith & love, and after all theſe.)

5 Fiftly, and laſtly, this is alſo required (which is much for our benefit) namely, to put up thy requeſt, when thou commeſt neere to the Lord in the Sacrament: Now thou muſt not onely doe this, but thou muſt alſo make ſome uſe of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with thee for his part, ſo that thou mayeſt thinke this

this with thy ſelfe; When I come to receive the Sacrament, I have but two workes to doe, one is to recovenant with the Lord, and to renew my repentance, and to ſet all even; and the other is to remember the Lords covenant.

You will ſay, what is the Covenant?

It's a Covenant that conſiſts of theſe three things or points; *Iuſtification, I will forgive thy ſinnes*; *Sanctification, I will make you new hearts and new ſpirits*; and the third, *All things are ours*; that is, I have made you heires of the world; heires of all things, you have all the promiſes belonging to you, that belong

Ier. 31. 34.

Ezek. 36. 26.

1 Cor. 3.

to

to this life, and that which is to come; this is the Covenant which the Lord hath made. Now thou art bound when thou commeſt to receive the Sacrament, not onely to remember this covenant, *Doe this* (ſaith hee) *in remembrance of Me*, and not barely of me, and of my being crucified for thee, and of all the love that I have ſhewed unto thee, but alſo in remembrance of the Covenant, & of thoſe gracious promiſes, which are the particulars of which that Covenant is the ſum: and therefore, thus a man is to doe. What? hath the Lord vouchſafed mee this favour, that I may come to his Table, I may come and

renew

renew the nuptials and my covenant with him? Surely, then I will looke about and conſider what I want, what requeſt I ſhall put up to him, for there is nothing, that is wanting, but it is within this Covenant; and thou art to put up thy requeſt in a ſpeciall manner, whatſoever it be, be it concerning things belonging to thy ſoule, to have a ſtrong luſt mortified, to have thy hard heart ſoftened, to have ſome ſin that lies upon thy conſcience forgiven, and to have that forgivenes aſſured to thee: bee it any thing that concernes thy particular eſtate, if it bee to bee delivered from a potent enemy, or what-

whatſoever it be, put up thy requeſt, and that largely, open thy mouth wide, that is, make thy requeſt full, feare it not. Put the caſe (againe) it be ſomwhat that doth not concerne thee, but that it concerneth the Church abroad; or the Church at home, it is a caſe that much concernes any of theſe in the Church, put it up to him, and put it up with confidence. For this is a marriage day (as it were) it is the time when hee reacheth out his ſcepter (as you know the things I allude to) and thou mayeſt come to his preſence: You know, when *Heſter* was admitted to the preſence of the

Eſter 5.3.

the King, then ſaid hee, What requeſt haſt thou? when thou art admitted to the familiarity and preſence of the Lord, he looks for it, hee askes what requeſt you have to put up to him? and the promiſes are large enough: *I will give it, whatſoever it bee, if you aske according to my will*; and therefore, doe in this caſe as *Moſes* uſed to doe: you ſhall finde when *Moſes* drew neere unto the Lord, when he was admitted into his preſence, and ſaw him face to face (for that was the great priviledge *Moſes* had) when there was any ſpeciall apparition of the Lord to him, *Moſes* makes this argument: (ſaith hee)

It

It is a great mercy that thou wouldeſt ſhew me this, that ſuch a poore man as I am, ſhould have this priviledge, and give mee leave to make
Exod.33. 13. uſe of it : *Lord, if I have found favour in thy ſight*, that is, ſince thou haſt vouchſafed mee ſuch a favour in thy ſight, doe thus and thus for me: you ſee he made this requeſt for the whole Church of God and ſaved them, or elſe they had beene deſtroyed. If thou haſt not any particular argument in this caſe, ſay, If I have found favour in thy ſight, doe this : ſo I ſay, when thou haſt this promiſe confirmed, that Chriſt hath given himſelfe to thee, and the Symboll of that

that promiſe is the bread and wine which hee hath given to thee, put up thy requeſt: O Lord, if thou haſt vouchſafed to give mee Chriſt, *wilt thou not with him give me all things elſe?* Rom. 8. 32
Lord, if I have found favour in thy ſight, to doe ſo great a thing for mee, deny mee not this particular requeſt. Thus wee ought to doe, eſpecially when wee come to things that are beyond nature: when wee come, let us conſider with our ſelves; Indeed I have a naturall diſpoſition that carries me ſtrongly to evill, I ſhall never bee able to overcome it, there are ſuch duties to doe, I ſhall never be able to performe them:

In

In ſuch a caſe thou muſt do it the more earneſtly, thou muſt ſigh and groane to the Lord. *Eliſhah* when hee comes to doe a thing ſo much above the courſe of nature, as to raiſe a dead child to life, hee ſighed unto the Lord, that is, hee prayed earneſtly. *Eliah*, when hee would have Raine, hee cryed, he tooke much paines, hee prayed. So muſt thou doe in this caſe: and know this for thy comfort, though thou think thou ſhalt never be able to doe theſe things, to overcome ſuch luſts, ſuch hereditary diſeaſes, yet the Lord is able to helpe thee: though theſe are paſt naturall helpe, yet they are not paſt

2 King. 4. 34.

Iam. 5. 15.

past the helpe of grace; though the spirit in us lust after envy; yet as the Apostle *Iames* saith, *The Scriptures offer more grace,* that is, the Scriptures offer grace and ability to doe more than nature can doe; nature cannot heale a spirit that lusteth after envie; or any other thing; a spirit that lusteth after credit, after money, after the sinne of uncleanneſſe, or whatsoever is presented: now the Scriptures offer that grace, that will overcome any of these sinnes, bee they never so strong, or so old; Christ healed hereditary diseases, hee healed those that were borne lame and blinde: so though thou be borne with such

Iam. 4. 6.

ſuch luſts, Chriſt is able to heale thee; you ſee a *Prophet* could heale *Naaman* of his Leproſie, when there was no other that could doe it; ſo ſaith Chriſt; *Come unto me all ye, and I will heale you.* So that you ſee wee muſt put up our requeſts to God.

Math. 11. 28.

The

The Third Sermon.

WE Have already made ſome entrance upon the words : I told you what the Apoſtles ſcope is in them, which is, to make knowne to all Chriſtians to whom hee wrote, another great priviledge, beſides that which hee named before: that is, *That hee that hath the Sonne, hath life*; this (ſaith he) is another priviledge, *that whatſoever you aske, you ſhall have*, only remember that you

you have *this assurance in him*, that is, in Christ Iesus, That point (what it is to be in him, that it may be the ground of all the benefits and priviledges wee injoy) wee handled the last day. Now wecome to the priviledge it selfe, *If wee aske any thing according to his will, hee heareth us*. The words are so plaine, I shall not need to spend any time in opening of them, but deliver you the point that lyes so evidently before us: which is this, [*That all the prayers of the Saints made upon earth, are assuredly heard in heaven*] whatsoever we aske, (saith he) according to his will, hee heareth us, onely the conditions must be

Doct.

bee obſerved. When you heare ſuch a generall as this, it muſt be limited, there are certaine bounds ſet to it, which wee will name unto you: which are theſe foure conditions. Firſt, all the prayers that are made upon earth ſhall be heard in heaven; if they be the prayers of a righteous man, and are faithfull and fervent. The *perſon* muſt bee *righteous*, that muſt firſt bee remembred: becauſe, although the prayer bee never ſo good, yet except the perſon bee accepted from whom it comes, the Lord regards it not: you know in the old Law, the *bloud of Swine* was reckoned an *abominable Sacrifice*, yet if you

Cond. 1.

Eſay 66. 3.

you take the bloud of ſheepe, and compare them together, you ſhall finde no difference; it may bee the Swines bloud is the better: then whats the reaſon the Swines bloud is not accepted? even becauſe of the ſubject of it, it was the bloud of Swine, and therefore you ſee it was put downe, that it was an abominable Sacrifice. So it is with prayers; Take the prayer of a Saint, and the prayer of a wicked man; it may bee if you looke upon the petition, or whatſoever is in the prayer it ſelfe, you ſhall finde ſome time the prayers of a godly man more cold, and leſſe fervent: the petitions are not

ſo

ſo well framed as the wicked mans: yet becauſe this comes from ſuch a perſon, the Lord regards it not; you know the condition is mentioned, *Iames fift: The prayer of the righteous man availeth much, if it bee fervent.* Now as this is required in the perſon, ſo there is ſomewhat required in the prayer alſo, that is, that it be fervent and faithfull; that it be fervent, you have it in the ſame place, *The prayer of a righteous man availeth much, if it bee fervent*; that is, it muſt bee a prayer made from the ſence of the miſerie that is in us, and from the mercy of God, when a man takes a thing to heart, that hee

prayes for, and comes with confidence to be heard, for that makes him fervent. This the Lord will have, and alſo hee will have it faithfull : *Iames* the firſt, when the Apoſtle exhorts them to prayer, *If any man wants wiſedome* (ſaith hee) *let him aske it of God*; but then marke, hee carefully puts in this condition, ſee that *He pray in faith*, that is, beleeve that it ſhall be done unto him : now this faith includes repentance, for no man can beleeve that hee ſhall be heard, except hee make his heart perfect with God : if he allow any ſinne in himſelfe, he cannot beleeve upon any good ground : therefore when I ſay

Iam. 1.5,6

ſay it muſt be faithfull, that alſo is included, we muſt *regard no wickedneſſe in our hearts*, for in ſuch a caſe, *the Lord heares not, he heares not ſinners*. So that this you muſt remember; Firſt, the perſon muſt bee righteous, and the prayer muſt bee fervent and faithfull.

Pſa. 66. 18

Iohn 9. 31.

Secondly, the other Condition you ſhall heare in the Text, it muſt be *according to his will*; you muſt not thinke, whatſoever you aske, if you aske it looſely at Gods hands, that it ſhall preſently bee granted you: No (ſaith he) it muſt be according to his will, if you *aske fire from heaven*, that is not according to his will, and therefore you ſee, *they*

2. Cond.

Luk. 9. 54. 55.

that aske it, were denyed it, with this reaſon, *you know not what you aske.* Likewiſe
Mat. 20. 21 22. *to ſit at his right hand, and at his left in heaven,* which was another requeſt of the Diſciples, he puts them by with this: *You underſtand not what you aske of the Father,* and therefore it muſt be according to his will. And that is the ſecond.

3. Cond. Thirdly, we muſt aske it in time, *in due ſeaſon:* ſo the promiſe is true, *Knocke, and it ſhall bee opened unto you;* but you know the *fooliſh Virgins* knocked and it was not opened to them; what was the reaſon of it? becauſe they askt when the time was paſt; for there is a
2 Cor. 6. 2. certain *acceptable time when the*

the Lord will be found: and when that opportunity is paſt, he is found no more. It is true, that this life is the time of grace, but God in his ſecret counſell hath appointed a certaine time to every man, which is the *acceptable time, the day of grace*; therefore hee ſaith unto them, *This day if ye wil heare:* this day if you will come and ſeeke unto me, if you will pray unto me, I will heare you: when it's paſt, the Lord ſuffers not the doores to ſtand open alwayes, his eares are not alwayes open: therefore that condition muſt be carefully remembred, you muſt aske in time, It is a condition that ſhould bee

carefully thought on by us. For, for the moſt part, wee fly to prayer as *Ioab did to the Altar*, he went not to it for devotion (for then he would have done it before) but when *he was in diſtreſſe*, when hee was in extremity, then he fled to it, and therefore you know what ſucceſſe hee had by it, it ſaved not his life: So we goe not to prayer for devotion, that is, out of love to God, to do him that ſervice; but (for the moſt part) we doe it out of ſelfe-love, when wee are in extremity or diſtreſſe, we paſſe the acceptable times he requires, and wee goe to him in a time of our owne: For there is Gods time, and there is our owne time; Gods

Gods time is to come to him when we may doe him ſervice in our youth, in our ſtrength, in the flower of our graces: our time is to goe to him when we need him. Will not a friend ſay (when wee never come to him, but when we have extreme need of him) why doe you come now? you were not wont to viſite me before, this is not out of love to me. Even the very ſame anſwer the Lord giveth; *Goe to your Idols* (ſaith he) *thoſe that you ſerved in the time of peace, and ſee if they can helpe you.* Iudg. 10. 14.

The fourth and laſt condition is, That wee referre the *time*, the *manner*, the *meaſure of granting our petitions* 4. Cond.

tions to the Lord. That is, wee muſt not thinke to bee our owne carvers, to thinke if it be not granted in ſuch a manner, ſuch a meaſure, or ſuch a time, preſently the Lord hath rejected our petitions; no, *he that beleeves makes no haſte*: That is, he waites upon God, he ſtayes himſelfe upon God, hee is content to have it in that time, in that manner and meaſure, as beſt pleaſeth the Lord: For the truth is, wee know not our ſelves what is meete for us, we are unto the Lord juſt as the Patient is to the Phyſitian. The patient is importunate with him, for ſuch things to refreſh and eaſe him; But the Phyſitian knowes what beſt

Eſa. 28, 16.

beſt belongs to him, and when to give him ſuch things, in what manner, and in what meaſure: So the Lord knowes beſt what to do: Many times he doth the ſame things that we deſire, though hee doe it not in the ſame manner: Even as the Phyſitian he quencheth often the thirſt with *Barberries*, or with ſuch kinde of conſerves; what though it be not with drinke, is it not all one ſo the thirſt bee quenched? Is it not all one whether a man bee hindred from ſtriking mee, or if I have a helmet to defend the blow? Sometimes the Lord keepes not off the enemy; but then hee gives us a helmet to keepe off

thoſe blowes, to beare thoſe injuries and evils that are done to us: hee is a wiſe phyſition, he knowes what manner, what meaſure, and what time is beſt, therefore that muſt bee referred to him: now theſe condirions being obſerved, you muſt know that this great priviledge belongs to every Chriſtian, That whatſoever prayers hee makes on earth, he is ſure to be heard in heaven: it is a wonderous priviledge, that which wee have all cauſe to ſtand amazed at, that the Lord ſhould ſo farre regard the ſonnes of men, to grant them ſuch a Charter as this; no more but aske and have, & whatſoever you pray for, it ſhall bee

be done to you. But a man is ready to ſay ſecretly in his heart when he heares it, This is too good to be true, That whatſoever I aske, I ſhall have. My beloved, I confeſſe it is a hard thing to beleeve it as wee ought to doe: and therefore before wee come to apply this, we will ſpend a little time in endevouring to convince you of the truth of it, that you may not doubt of it, that what prayers you make to the Lord he is ready to heare them.

First, conſider that whatſoever prayer you make, he takes notice of it, he obſerves every petition, there is not one petition that you make to him at any time, but

but he lookes upon it, hee ſees what the prayer is. And this thing although you think it common, (and who is there that know not this?) yet (my beloved) to beleeve this, to thinke that God is preſent where I make my prayer to him, to thinke he ſtands and heares it, even as I ſpeake to a man that ſtands and heares mee, and underſtands what I ſay to him, This is a great helpe to us. That this is true, ſee in 4. *Eph.* 6. *He is in all, and through all, and over all,* That is, the Lord is in every man, he paſſeth through every thing, *his eyes runne through the earth*, and hee is over all, looking what *ſecrets are in mans heart*, what *thoughts*;

2 Chron. 16. 9. Pſal. 14. 21

thoughts; yea before hee thinks them he knowes them, because hee ſeeth them in their cauſes: Hee that is in a man, that lookes in all the ſecret corners of the heart, hee muſt needs ſee what thoughts he hath, what petitions he putteth up ſecretly, even then when his mouth ſpeakes not. And leaſt that ſhould not bee enough, ſaith he, *Hee is over all*; you know, one that ſtands on high, and lookes over all that is below, hee eaſily can ſee whatſoever is done; So the Lord, he is in all, he is through all, hee is over all. But this is enough for that; only I would have you remember, that hee takes notice of all, hee knowes

Pſ. 139. 23

Preſton, J.

knowes thy prayers.

Queſt. But you will ſay; I doubt not of that, I make no queſtion but he heares me, and underſtands mee well enough: but how ſhall I know that hee is willing to grant the thing I pray for?

Anſw. You ſhall ſee theſe two Reaſons, in the 7. of *Mat.* where our Saviour urgeth this very point, that wee have now in hand, from the 7. *verſe* downeward; *Aske* (ſaith he) *and you ſhall have; ſeeke, and you ſhall finde: knocke, and it ſhall be opened unto you*: here is the promiſe. *For* (he backs it with theſe two reaſons) *Every one that asketh receiveth; and hee that ſeeketh findeth; and*

and to him that knocketh, it ſhall be opened unto him: As if he ſhould ſay; yee have this reaſon for it, why you ſhould beleeve it, that it is no more but aske and have; for (ſaith he) all that ever aſked have obtained; all that ever have ſought, have found; all that ever have knocked, it hath beene opened unto them. That is, looke through the whole booke of God, and ſee what prayers ever have beene made to him, and you ſhall finde, that there is not a prayer mentioned in all the Scriptures, but it hath been heard. Now when we have ſuch a cloud of witneſſes, it is a ſtrong reaſon, when it is ſaid to us that there were never

never any prayed but were heard.

Queſt. Why, you will ſay, There were many prayed that were not heard: Did not *David* pray for his Childe, and was not heard? Did not *Paul* pray to bee delivered from ſuch a temptation, and was not heard?

Anſw. My Beloved, It's true, they were not heard for the particular, but yet I dare be bold to ſay, that *David* was heard at that time, though (I ſay) not in the particular; for though his Childe was taken away, yet you may ſee the Lord gave him a Childe of the ſame woman, with much more advantage; hee gave him a Childe that was legitimate,

mate, which this was not: hee gave him a Childe that exceeded for wiſedome, *Solomon* was the Child that hee had: So that the Lord did heare him, and gave him this anſwer, as if he had ſaid to him, *David* I have heard thee, I know that thou art exceeding importunate; thou ſhalt not have this, but thou ſhalt have another Childe which ſhall be better. And ſo he ſaith unto *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 12. Chriſt reveales this unto him; *Paul* (ſaith he) though I grant thee not this particular requeſt, in the manner that thou wouldeſt have mee, (*To take away the pricke of the fleſh which thou art troubled with*) thou ſhalt bee a greater

greater gainer by it, thou haddeſt better have it than want it; when *Paul* underſtood that it was a medicine and not a poyſon as hee tooke it to be, hee was content and reſolved in it; And a man reſolveth not except he be a gainer. He ſaw that *Gods power was manifeſt in his weakeneſſe*, and hee ſaw himſelfe humbled by it; and when he ſaw that God gained glory and himſelfe humiliation by it, hee was content to be denyed in it; So I ſay, whoſoever asketh findeth, you ſhall never finde any example but that whoſoever ſought to the Lord as he ought, hee was certainely heard, or elſe he had ſomewhat that was better

better granted to him in ſtead of it. And this is the firſt reaſon that is uſed here. The ſecond reaſon is this; *What man among you, if his Sonne aske bread, will give him a ſtone; or if he aske a fiſh, will give him a ſerpent? if you then that are evill, know how to give good things to your children, how much more ſhall your heavenly Father give good things to them which aske him?* (ſaith he) you be not able to perſwade your ſelves of this truth, becauſe you know not the Father, for hee dwells in light inacceſſible, you are not acquainted with him, ſaith our Saviour: I will helpe you out with an argument that you better

Math. 7. 9. 10. 11.

better underſtand; even upon earth (ſaith he) take but a father here, a father that is ill (but the Lord is full of goodneſſe; fathers have but a drop, but a ſparke of mercy in them, whereas the Lord is full of mercy, as the Lord is ful of light, he is the God of all comfort:) Yet, (ſaith he) this father, when his ſon comes to aske him bread) he is ready to give it him, he is ful of compaſſion & tendernes towards him; doe you not thinke that our heavenly Father is as true a father as he, that hee loves you as well as hee whoſe compaſſion and pitty is much greater? Doe you not thinke hee is ready to heare his Children when they

they call upon him? O this is a ſtrong and unanſwerable Reaſon, and this you ſee is backed in *16.Ioh.27.* you ſee there the love of the Father how it is expreſſed to us; *I ſay not unto you that I will aske the Father* (ſaith hee) *the Father himſelfe loves you*, Marke, as if he ſhould have ſaid, let this bee one ground to you to think your petitions ſhal be granted, and that they are not onely granted for my ſake, for (ſaith he) the Father himſelfe loveth you, and hath a great affection to you, that is in naturall parents, there is a naturall affection to their Children: So if I were not immediatly to preſent your peti-

petitions (though that bee not excluded) yet (ſaith he) the Father hath ſuch an affection to you, that he cannot chooſe but heare you; *I ſay not* (ſaith he) *that I will aske the father, for the father himſelfe loveth you.* So that this is the ſecond reaſon which this promiſe is there backed with, the love of the father, That he cannot find in his heart to deny us, even for that affection that he beareth to us. We will adde a third Reaſon that wee meete here in the ſame *Chap. 16. Iohn 23. In that day you ſhal aske in my name: verily, verily, I ſay unto you, ye ſhall aske the Father in my name, and he will give it you,* It is brought in upon this occa-

occaſion, when our Saviour Chriſt was to goe from his Diſciples, they were ready to complaine, as wee ſee in the verſes before, they were ready to ſay with themſelves, alas, what ſhall wee doe when our Maſter ſhall bee tooke from our head? Our Saviour anſwers them, you ſhall doe wel enough, doubt you not, for though I bee not with you; yet (ſaith he) go to the Father in my name, and whatſoever you aske of him, you ſhall have it: So that hee anſwers that objection, when a man is ready to ſay:

Queſt. It's true, I know that a father is exceeding loving to his Children: But it may be

bee, my carriage hath not beene ſuch, I am full of infirmities, I have much in me that may turne the love and affection of my Father from me.

Anſw. Put the caſe you have, yet Chriſt addes this for your comfort, If (ſaith he) the Father will not doe it for your ſake, yet doubt you not, if you aske in my name, hee will doe it; doe wee not ſee it uſuall among men, That one that is a meere ſtranger to another, if hee get a letter from a friend, hee thinkes to prevaile; and he doth ſo, becauſe though it be not done for his ſake (it may be he is a ſtranger, one that deſerved nothing at his hands) yet

yet ſuch a friend may deſerue much: and when wee goe to God in the name of Chriſt, this anſwers all the objections, whatſoever you can ſay againſt your ſelves, it is all ſatisfied in this: I goe in his name, I am ſure he hath ſupply, I am ſure he is no ſtranger, I know hee hath deſerved it, &c. Laſt of all, as he loves us, and becauſe we aske in the name of Chriſt, he is ready to heare us: we will adde this, that he is ready to heare us for his owne ſake, *Hee is a God hearing prayer*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt, that all fleſh might come to him*, even for this cauſe hee heares, that men may bee encouraged to come and ſeeke to him; for Pſal. 65. 2.

if the Lord ſhould not heare, then no fleſh would come unto him; that is, men would have no encouragement, no helpe; therefore he ſaith, he is a *God hearing prayer*, doubt ye not, he will doe it for this purpoſe, that he might have men to worſhip him, that men might come and ſeeke unto him. Beſides that, hee ſhall bee glorified, *Thou ſhalt call upon me in the day of trouble, I will heare thee, and thou ſhalt glorifie me*; Now the Lord is deſirous of glory; it was the end for which he made the world. But in not hearing our prayer, hee loſeth this glory; by hearing our requeſts, the more wee are heard, the more glory and praiſe

Pſal. 50. 15

praiſe we render unto him. Likewiſe he doth it for the Spectators ſake; *Moſes* often preſenteth that Reaſon, *Lord doe it: What will the Heathen ſay? and leſt thy name bee polluted among them; they will ſay thou haſt brought out a people, and waſt not able to deliver them.* So *David* often, there are many inſtances in that; I ſay, for the lookers on ſake he is ready to doe it. All this is enough to perſwade our hearts, that hee is ready to heare us, then when prayers are made to him on earth. (So the conditions be obſerved) they are ſurely heard in heaven.

Exo. 32. 12 13.

Now to apply this: Firſt, if the Lord bee ſo ready to

Uſe 1.

heare, then this ſhould teach us to be more fervent in this dutie of prayer then commonly wee are; for to what end are ſuch promiſes as this, but to encourage us to doe our duties? when wee heare that prayer is of ſo much efficacy, that it prevailes with the Lord for any thing, ſhall wee ſuffer it to lye by (as it were) and not make uſe of it? If a drug, or a pretious balme commended unto us, and it were told us, that if we made uſe of it, it would heale any wound, it will heale any ſickneſſe, and this and this vertue it hath: Will a wiſe man ſuffer it to lye by him, will hee not uſe it,

it, and ſee what vertue it hath? And when it is ſaid unto us, that prayer is thus prevalent with the Lord, that it is thus potent, that it is thus able to prevaile with him for any thing, ſhall we not make uſe of it, when we are in any diſtreſſe, when wee need any thing: when we have any diſeaſe, either of ſoule or body to heale? Let us flye to this refuge that himſelfe hath appointed. If a King of the earth ſhould ſay to a man, I will be ready to doe thee a good turne, make uſe of me when thou haſt occaſion; hee would bee ready enough to doe it. Now when the Lord of heaven ſaith, aske what you will at my hands, and I

will doe it; ſhall wee not ſeeke to him, and make uſe of ſuch a promiſe as this? Beloved wee are too backward in this; we ſhould bee more abundant in this duty than wee are, wee ſhould make more account of it. For whatſoever the caſe bee, if you doe but ſeeke to the Lord, if thou doſt but ſet downe thy reſolution with thy ſelfe: Well, I ſee it is a thing (if I looke upon the creature & the meanes) I have little hope of, but the Lord is able to do it & therfore I will go to him, I will weary him & not give him nor my ſelfe any reſt, till I have obtained it: I ſay it is impoſſible thou ſhouldeſt faile in ſuch a caſe. Onely remem-

remẽber to be importunate, for an importunate ſuiter he cannot deny. You know the *parable of the unjuſt Iudg.* You know alſo the *parable of the man that is in bed with his children; when the widow was importunate*, when ſhe knockt and would give him no reſt, hee gives her redreſſe; the other riſeth and giveth his friend *as many loves as hee will*; yea, *though he were not his friend*, (for this is the meaning of it;) If, ſaith he, the Lord had not much love to you, if he had not ſuch an affection, if you did not come to him in the name of Chriſt whom hee loves, in whom hee is ready to grant whatſoever you aske, if he were not

Luk. 18. 2. 3, 4.

Luk. 11. 7.

a friend to you; yet for your very importunity, he is ready to do it. As the unjuſt Iudge (for that is the ſcope of the parable) hee had no minde to grant the widowes requeſt, hee had no Iuſtice in him to moove him, hee had no mercy nor compaſſion, yet for very importunity hee granted it. Remember and obſerve the condition, for this is commonly a fault amongſt us; when we goe to prayer, we thinke that the very putting up of prayer will doe it. No, there is more required than ſo. As it is the error of the Countrey people, when they heare ſay, that ſuch an herbe is good for ſuch a diſeaſe, they are readie

die to thinke, that (howſoever it bee tooke or applyed) it will heale the diſeaſe; No, it muſt bee applyed in ſuch a manner, it muſt bee uſed in ſuch a faſhion. So it is with prayer, you muſt not onely doe the duty (and therefore when wee exhort you to it, not onely to call upon God, for men are ready enough to doe that, eſpecially in the time of diſtreſſe) but with theſe conditions I have named. You know *Gehazi* when he had got the ſtaffe of *Eliſha*, hee went to the Childe, but it was not the ſtaffe that could raiſe the child from death to life, there was ſomething more required. So in prayer, it is not meere

2 King. 4. 29. 31.

prayer that will do it, there is ſomething elſe, there muſt bee other conditions that muſt be obſerved. For we are wont to doe with it, as thoſe Conjurers were wont to doe with the name of Ieſus; they thought if they uſed the name of Ieſus, it was enough: but ye know what anſwer the Spirit gives them, *Ieſus wee know, and Paul we know, but who are yee?* So I ſay, wee are wont to doe in this caſe, wee thinke it is enough to make our requeſt, and that is all. No, there is ſomewhat more required, you muſt make your requeſt in ſuch a manner as ye ought. Then I adde this further, that when thou makeſt them

Act. 19. 15

them in ſuch a manner, yet thou muſt not thinke to be heard for thy prayers ſake: that is another thing we are apt to faile in. When wee have made fervent prayers, and have been importunate with the Lord, wee thinke now ſurely wee ſhall not faile. No, you muſt know this, the promiſe is not made to the prayer, but to the perſon praying. You ſhall not finde throughout the whole Scripture, that any promiſe is made thus, becauſe we pray fervently we ſhall be heard: but it is made to the perſon praying, the prayer is but the inſtrument, but the meanes by which the bleſſing is conveyed to us, is a meanes with-

without which the Lord will not doe it, for the promiſe is made to the party. A cold prayer (ſo there be no neglect in it, ſo a man ſeeke the Lord, and pray as well as he can,) it will prevaile ſometimes as well as a fervent prayer: Who indites the petition, who makes the prayer fervent? ſurely not thy ſelfe, but the *Holy Ghoſt*: *he makes requeſt in us*, ſometimes hee makes thee more fervent, hee enlargeth the heart more: ſometimes againe the heart is more ſtraitned in the performance of this duty: but both may come from the ſame Spirit. Not but that wee have cauſe of much comfort, when we are able to

Rom. 8. 26 27.

to pray fervently, for this is a ground of our comfort, that when we pray fervently, it is an argument that the *Holy Ghoſt* dwels in our hearts, and that our prayers are dictated by him; it is an argument, that our prayers come from a holy fire within. And therefore fervent prayer may give us hope of being heard, but yet it is not meerely the prayer, but becauſe it is an evidence that it comes from a right principle, that it comes from the regenerate part, & is made by the aſſiſtance of the *Holy Ghoſt*; it is not the very fervency that prevailes. And therefore when you heare this, that the Lord is ready to heare, I ſay

make

make that uſe of it, bee fervent in this duty, remember the conditions: and yet withall know, that you are not heard for the very prayers ſake, but for Ieſus Chriſt his ſake. Hee makes every prayer acceptable, hee mingles them with his ſweet odours.

Obiect. And if you obiect, O but I am a man full of infirmities.

Anſw. You know how it is anſwered in the firſt of *Iames*, (ſaith he) *Eliah* when hee was heard, *hee was a man*, and a man *ſubiect to paſsions*, and to the *like paſsions that we are*: As if he ſhould ſay, doe not thinke that *Eliah* was therefore heard, becauſe he was an extraordinarie

Iam. 5. 17.

narie *Prophet*, for it was because the Lord had made a promise to him, and hee comes and urges that promise to the Lord, and therefore the Lord heard him. So (saith he) should every one of you, if you have the promise, you may goe and urge it, as well as *Eliah* did: though you bee subject to many infirmities, *Eliah* was even so. You know there are infirmities and passions expressed in the Scriptures that he was subject to. And this is the first use we are to make of it, to bee frequent & fervent in this duty, since we have such a promise.

Use 2.

Secondly, if wee have such a promise, then wee should learne hence (when wee

we have put up our prayers at any time) to make more account of them than wee doe: for the truth is, that wee pray for the moſt part for faſhion ſake, many a man ſaith thus with himſelfe: I will ſeeke the Lord, if it doe me no good, it will doe no hurt, but if we made that account of our prayers as we ſhould, we would performe this duty in another manner, but we doe not make that account of them as wee ought. Wee thinke not with our ſelves that the prayers that wee make are ſurely heard: there be many evidences of it; what is the reaſon, that when wee ſeeke the Lord, we doe it ſo remiſly that we have ſcarce leaſure

leaſure to make an end of our prayers : we are ſo ready to haſten and goe about other buſineſſe, we are readie to turne every ſtone, to uſe all meanes to ſeeke the creatures with all diligence: but who prayes to the Lord as hee ought, to worke his heart to ſuch a fervent performance of that duty as he ſhould? men have ſcarcely leaſure, for it is uſuall with them when they have buſineſſe to doe, and enterpriſes to bring to paſſe, they are exceeding diligent to uſe all meanes; and yet are remiſſe in the chiefe : what is the reaſon elſe, that wee ſee the doores of Princes and great men ſo full of ſuiters, though there bee porters

porters ſet on purpoſe to drive them away; but the gates of heaven are ſo emptie. It is indeed becauſe wee doe not beleeve our prayers are heard, wee doe but make our prayers for faſhion. What is the reaſon likewiſe, that wee uſe prayer in the time of diſtreſſe (if it will bee an effectuall meanes to helpe us, when all other meanes faile,) why uſe we it not before? But that is an argument that we truſt not to it, ſeeing we uſe it, onely in the time of extremity: for if it be not effectuall, why do we uſe it then? Therefore this uſe wee muſt further make, when wee heare that the Lord heares our prayers, to make

make more account of them than we do, to thinke that our prayers when they are put up to the Lord ſhall be heard. Say thus with thy ſelfe, Well, now I have prayed, and I expect that the thing ſhould be granted that I have prayed for, when I ſeeke to the Lord. It's true, I deny not but we muſt uſe the meanes too, we muſt lay the hands upon the plough, and yet pray; both ought to be done, as ſometimes wee uſe two friends, but wee truſt one; wee uſe two Phyſitians, but we put confidence in one of them: In like manner wee muſt both pray and uſe the meanes, but ſo as wee put our chiefe truſt in prayer,

er, it is not meanes that will doe it. But the truth is, we doe the quite contrary: It may bee, wee pray and uſe the meanes, but wee truſt the meanes, and not the prayer: that is a common and great fault among us, it is a peece of Atheiſme, for men to thinke the Lord regards their prayers, no more than hee regards the bleating of ſheepe or the lowing of oxen, to thinke hee heedes them not. And it's a great part of faith to thinke that the Lord harkens to them and regards them, as certainely hee doth.

Object. But you will ſay, I have prayed, and am not heard, and have ſought to the Lord,

Lord, and have found no anſwer.

Anſw. Well, it may bee thou haſt not for the preſent, but haſt thou ſtayed the Lords leaſure? (for that is to bee conſidered in this caſe,) ſometimes the Lord comes quickly, hee gives a quicke anſwer to our requeſts; ſometimes hee ſtayes longer: But this is our comfort, that when the returne is longer, the gaine is the greater: as we ſee in trades, ſome trades have their returne very quicke, it may bee the tradeſmens money is returned every weeke, but then their gaine is ſo much the lighter; but when their returne is ſlower, as is your greater merchants, when

when it ſtayes three or foure yeares, wee ſee the ſhips come home laden, bringing ſo much the more: So (for the moſt part) when our prayers doe ſtay long, they returne with the greater bleſſings, they returne loaden with rich commodities. Let this bee an encouragement to us. Though he ſtay, the Lord will grant it; and thinke not with thy ſelfe, I made ſuch a prayer long agone, I found no fruit of it; for be ſure, the Lord remembreth thy prayer, though thou haſt forgotten it: the prayers that thou madeſt a good many yeares agoe, may doe thee good many yeares hence. May not a man pray to have his Child

Child ſanctified, to have him brought to better order? It may bee hee lives many yeares, and ſees no ſuch thing, yet in the end, the prayer may bee effectuall: So likewiſe it may bee in many caſes, you ſee there are many examples for it: *Abraham* prayed, he ſtayed long; but you ſee it was a great bleſſing that he had, when he prayed for a Son, you know what a Sonne he was, hee was a Sonne of the promiſe, in whom all the nations of the earth were bleſſed. So *David* when the Lord promiſed him a kingdome, hee ſtayed long for it. Many ſuch examples there are. Therefore comfort thy ſelfe with this: though

though I ſtay long, this is my hope, this is my encouragement, that ſuſtaines me, If I ſeeke the Lord, and waite upon him, He will come with a great bleſſing, the gaine ſhall bee heavier and greater, though the returne be not ſo quicke and ſudden.

Vſe.3 Laſt of all, when you heare ſuch a promiſe as this, That whatſoever you aske you ſhall be heard in it, you ſhall hence learne, to ſpend ſome time in the meditation of this great priviledge that the Saints have, and none but they; This I propound to every mans conſideration; that thoſe that are not Chriſts, that is, thoſe that are not regene-

rate,

rate, may know what they loſe by it; and thoſe that are, may underſtand the happineſſe of their condition, that they may learne to magnifie it, and to bleſſe themſelves in that condition, that they have ſuch a great priviledge as this: It is no more but aske and have; therefore that which in the third place I exhort you to, is this, namely to ſpend time in the meditation of it, to conſider what a great advantage it is; *David* cannot ſatisfie himſelfe enough in it: 18, and 116. *Pſalmes*; *Lord I love thee dearely*: hee cannot praiſe him enough, and why? *I ſought to thee in diſtreſſe, and thou heardeſt me; I called*

upon mee, and thou inclinedſt thine eare to my prayer. I ſay, conſider this mercy as you ought to doe, it is part of the thankes wee owe to the Lord for ſo an exceeding priviledge, That whatſoever our caſe bee, it is no more, but put up our requeſts, and wee ſhall bee heard. When there was a ſpeech among ſome holy men (as you know that man that was named in the ſtorie;) what was the beſt trade, hee anſwered, Beggerie; It is the hardeſt, and it is the richeſt trade. Now hee underſtands it not, of common beggerie (for this is the pooreſt and eaſieſt trade, that condition hee puts

puts in) but (ſaith he) I underſtand it of a prayer to God, that kinde of beggerie I meane; which as it is the hardeſt, nothing more hard than to pray to God as wee ought, ſo withall there is this comfort in it, it is the richeſt trade of all others; there is no way to inrich our ſelves ſo much, with all the promiſes that belong either to this life, or to that which is to come: Even as you ſee among men, a Courtier, a Favorite in the Court, gets more by one ſuite, (it may be,) than a Tradeſman, or Merchant, or husbandman gets with twentie yeeres labour, though hee takes much paines; for one requeſt may

bring more profit, may make a Courtier richer than ſo many yeares labour and paines: So in like caſe a faithfull prayer, put up to God, may more prevaile with him, we may obtaine more at his hands by it, than by many yeares labour, or uſing many meanes; and therefore it is a rich trade, and great priviledge, a priviledge that wee cannot thinke enough of, that wee cannot eſteeme enough. You have heard of a noble man in this Kingdome, that had a Ring given him by the *Queene*, with this promiſe: that if hee ſent that Ring to her, at any time when hee was in diſtreſſe, ſhee would remember him and

and deliver him; This was a great priviledge from a Prince, and yet you ſee, what that was ſubject unto; hee might bee in ſuch a diſtreſſe, when neither King nor Queene could bee able to helpe him; or though they were able, (as ſhe was in that caſe) yet it might be ſent, and not delivered: Now then conſider what the Lord doth to us. Hee hath given us this priviledge, hee hath given us prayer, as it were this Ring, he hath given us that touſe, and tels us whatſoever our caſe is, whatſoever we are, whatſoever wee ſtand in need of, whatſoever diſtreſſe wee are in, doe but ſend this up to mee, (ſaith

hee) doe but deliver that meſſage up to me of prayer, and I will be ſure to relieve you. Now certainely what caſe ſoever we are in, when we ſend up this, it is ſure to be conveyed, whereſoever we are: Againe, whatſoever our caſe is, we ſend it to one that is able to helpe us, which a Prince many times is not able to doe. This benefit wee have by prayer: That whatſoever wee aske at the Lords hands, we ſhall have it. Now conſider this great advantage which you have; It is expreſſed 4. *Phil.* in theſe words, *Be in nothing carefull* (ſaith the Apoſtle:) And that you may ſee wee have ground for this generality, *In nothing*

thing bee carefull, but in all things make your requeſts knowne unto God. That is, whatſoever your caſe be, I make no exception at all, but whatſoever you ſtand in need of, whether it concernes your ſoules or your bodies, your name or your eſtate; yet bee in nothing carefull. This is a great matter: there is none amongſt you that heares me now, but ſome times or other he is carefull of ſomething or other, for which he is ſolicitous: Now when a man heares ſuch a voyce from heaven, that the Lord himſelfe ſaith to us, Bee careſull for nothing, doe no more but make your requeſts knowne, it is well e-

nough, I will ſurely heare in heaven, and grant it; It is a great comfort. Beloved, comfort your ſelves with theſe words, and thinke this with your ſelves, that this is that Charter, and great Grant the Lord hath given you, and to none but you, that what prayers you make to him, hee heareth you.

Queſt. But it will bee objected, why is this ſaid ſo generally? That wee muſt in nothing be carefull, but in all things make our requeſt knowne? For then if a man were but a poore man, it is but going to the Lord, and asking riches, and hee ſhall have them. If a man were ſicke of an incurable diſeaſe,

eaſe, it were no more but going to the Lord, and hee ſhould bee ſure to be recovered; If a man hath an enterpriſe to bring to paſſe, it is no more but goe to him, and it ſhall be done: what is the reaſon then, that godly and holy men have not theſe things granted to them.

Anſw. To this I anſwer, you muſt underſtand it with this condition, even as it is with a Father (I wil prove it to you by that,) ſuppoſe he ſhould ſay to his ſonne, I will deny thee nothing, whatſoever I have, I will deny thee nothing, but thou ſhalt have part in it; Though hee ſay no more, yet we underſtand it with theſe conditions.

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1 First, that if his Childe ſhall aske him for that, that is not good for him, or if the Child ſhould refuſe to have that done, or pray his Father and ſay, I beſeech you doe it not, when the Father knowes it is good: here the Father is not bound hee thinkes: for example, if a Father ſees his child needes Phyſick, it may bee, the child finds it bitter, and therefore exceeding loath to take it, it makes him ſicke, and it is irkeſome unto him, ſo that he earneſtly deſires his Father that he may bee excuſed, that he might be freed from it: In this caſe the Father will not heare him, for hee knowes the Child is

is but miſtaken. On the other ſide; if the Child aske ſomething that is very hurtfull, if he aske for wine in a feaver, the father denies it him; No, (ſaith he) you are miſtaken, I know your deſire is that you might have health and recover, and this I know will hurt you, though you know it not; This the father underſtands, and therefore he puts in that condition. So when the Lord ſaith, *In nothing bee carefull, but in all things make your requeſts knowne*: If you miſtake the matter at any time, and your prayer ſhall not be the dictate of the Spirit, (ſo that ye alway make requeſt according to his will) but the dictate

dictate of your own hearts, and ſhall be the expreſſion of your naturall ſpirit, and not the Lords Spirit: In this caſe there is no promiſe of being heard, and yet the Lord makes his Word good, Bee in nothing carefull, but in all things make yur requeſts knowne.

2 Secondly, a Father when he ſaith to his Child, I will denie you nothing, but you ſhall have part in all that I have, yet the Child may carry himſelfe ſo that the Father, upon ſuch an occaſion may deny him, and bee ready to ſay unto him; Well, if you had followed your Booke, if you had not run into ſuch diſorders, if you had not beene negligent

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gent to do what I gave you in Charge, I would have done it: In this caſe, the Father withholds the bleſſing that he will beſtow upon his Child; not becauſe he is unwilling to beſtow it, but becauſe hee would thus nurture his Child, hee uſeth it as a meanes to bring him to order: So the Lord ſaith to *Moſes*, That becauſe hee had ſpoken unadviſedly, becauſe he had not honoured him before the people, at thoſe waters, *the waters of ſtrife*, therefore the Lord tels him by the Prophet, *he ſhall not goe into the good land*: And ſo hee tels *David*, that becauſe *hee had ſinned againſt him, hee would not give him the life* of

Num. 20. 21. Pſal. 10. 32, 33.

2 Sam. 12. 14.

of the Child: So the Lord ſaith to us ſometimes; I will not grant you this requeſt: for though I be willing to grant it, yet this is one part of the diſcipline and nurture that I uſe to my Children, That ſuch a particular requeſt, I will deny you for ſuch an offence; as *worſhipping of Idols, &c.* Beloved this is not a generall denyall, and this is not for our diſadvantage, but it is a helpe to us, it makes us better, that ſometime wee ſhould be denyed: knowing hereby that it is denyed unto us for our ſinne, that wee may learne to come to the Lord, and renew our repentance, and to take that away, that we may come to pre-

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prevaile in our prayers with him.

Thirdly, when a Father is willing to grant it, yet he will thus ſay to his Child, Though I bee willing to doe what you aske at my hands, yet I will not have you aske it rudely, I will have you aske it in a good manner and a good Faſhion. (For when wee come to call upon God, and come in an unreverent manner, in ſuch a caſe the Lord heares not.) Or againe, hee will ſay to his childe; I am ready to heare you, but you muſt not aske in a negligent manner, as if you cared not whether you had it or no: So the Lord ſaith to us; I will have you to pray fervently, 3

vently, you ſhall aske it, as that which you prize. Againe, hee will ſay to his childe: I am willing to beſtow this upon you, but I do not give you this mony, to ſpend it amiſſe, to play it away, to ſpend it in trifles, and geugawes, that will do you no good: So ſaith the Lord, I am willing to give you riches, *but not to beſtow upon your luſts.* Thus ſpeakes the father to his childe, when he comes to aske, hee tels him hee muſt come in ſuch a manner as becomes a child, hee muſt ſpeake to him as to a Father, hee muſt ſpeake with confidence to receive it: So alſo the Lord tels us, *we muſt come in faith*; So that (in

Iames 4.3.

Iames 1.6.

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(in a word) this is to bee remembred; That though the Lord promiſe, that hee will give whatſoever wee aske, and bids us, In nothing bee carefull, but make our requeſts knowne; yet notwithſtanding this he would have us to underſtand that our requeſts bee made in ſuch a manner as they ought to be. Laſt of all, it may bee the Father is willing to doe it; but he makes a little pauſe, hee will not give it preſently, and ſuddenly to his child, though he purpoſe to beſtow it upon him, that hee may come by it with difficulty; So the Lord uſeth to withhold his bleſſings many times, that his child might be

be exerciſed in prayer, and ſeeke him the more, and likewiſe that hee might come the hardlier by the bleſſing, that ſo hee might learne to prize it more, or elſe he will be ready to doe as young heires: As it is with ſome when they never knew the getting of it, they ſpend it eaſily; but he that hath knowne what it is, takes more care to his eſtate, hee lookes more diligently to it: So it would be with us in any bleſſng, if we had it with ſuch facility as we would, we would not make much account of it; but when it comes with ſome hardneſſe, with ſome difficulty, it teacheth us to ſet a higher price on it, and

ſo

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ſo it makes us more thankefull, it teacheth us to give more praiſe and glory to the Lord. There are many that have had a ſickneſſe long, and have obtained health with much prayer, and much contention, and therefore they learne to prize it more, than another that obtaines it eaſily. And thus it is in every like caſe. So when you heare this great priviledge: that it is no more, but, *aske and have:* and, *bee in nothing carefull, but in every thing make your requeſts knowne:* yet (I ſay) theſe conditions muſt needs bee inſerted, theſe are ſuch as muſt bee included. But theſe conſidered, remember this privi-

priviledge, rejoyce in it, let the Lord have the praiſe of it, that *Whatſoever wee aske according to his will, he heareth us.*

FINIS.

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GRACE
TO THE
HVMBLE.
AS
Preparations to Receive the SACRAMENT.

Preached by the Late famous Preacher IOHN PRESTON, Doctor of *Divinity*, and Chaplen in Ordinary to his *Mtie*. Maſter of *Immanuel* Colledge, and ſometimes Preacher in *Lincolnes-Inne*.

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